Commentary

VOLUME EIGHTY-SIX • NUMBER FOUR • OCTOBER 1988

Liberalism & American Jews

Irving Kristol

Before and After Glasnost
Yuri Orlov

In Praise of Richard Nixon
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Adultery, from Hawthorne to Updike
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Is Jordan Palestine?
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Religion in Politics; Politics in Religion
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Books in Review: Joshua Muravchik / Thomas J. Main / Michael Ledeen / Herb Greer / Donna Rifkind

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Letters from Readers

Who Is a Jew

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Elie Kedourie's article, "Who Is a Jew" [June], confronts the issue of what it means to be a Jew in the context of a secular, open Western civilization. In framing the issue, Mr. Kedourie refers, *inter alia*, to the writings of the late Arnold J. Toynbee, one of this century's major figures in the field of the philosophy of history. As he correctly points out, Toynbee painted a rather bleak view of Judaism and the Jewish people in the original volumes of his massive *A Study of History* (1934-54). As Mr. Kedourie also says, this was significantly modified by Toynbee in his later writings in which he came to consider Judaism a major force in the ongoing spiritual development of Western, even world, civilization.

Why did Toynbee change his views and what was the significance of the change? Mr. Kedourie claims that the change is first noted in the one-volume abridgment of the *Study* published in 1972 and says the cause is "inexplicable." However, the process of change, rather than being inexplicable, can be documented by referring to Toynbee's extended dialogue with the late Rabbi Jacob B. Agus. . . . The changes in Toynbee's views are presented in Volume 11 of the *Study*, published in 1960, which was intended as a place to present "reconsiderations" of the issues, ideas, and conclusions in the previous ten volumes.

One of the issues that Toynbee identified as requiring serious reconsideration was his perspective on and characterization of Judaism and the Jewish people, whom he had previously termed "fossils." He also reexamined the role of Judaism as a living force for spiritual growth, and the relevance of the life of the Jewish people to the evolving world civilization. In each case, . . . he cited his dialogue with Rabbi Agus as a major source for his new perspective. For example, with reference to the use of the term "fossil," Toynbee wrote, ". . . I now recognize, however, that it [fossil] must seem offensive since Rabbi Agus finds the phrase 'distressing' and no critic could be more temperate and objective-minded than he is." . . .

The dialogue and eventually close personal relationship between these two giants of the mind and the soul began in 1955 with the publication of Rabbi Agus's response to Toynbee's *Study* in the Fall 1955 issue of *Judaism* magazine (reprinted in *Dialogue and Tradition*, 1971). Toynbee wrote to Rabbi Agus that the article touched him deeply, since "this kind of constructive criticism is, of course, not only a help but a call to go on thinking. . . . I can see that Judaism will be one of these issues [to be reconsidered] and when I come to this your article will be one of the things I shall have at my elbow." . . .

As Toynbee worked on his volume of reconsiderations, he asked for reviews, criticism, and advice from Rabbi Agus. In a letter to Rabbi Agus in December 1959, he wrote, "Besides making, throughout, the two verbal changes you suggest, I am revising particularly the concluding section of my Chapter XV in the light of your comments. . . ." Toynbee then went even further and included those comments, plus two others, as appendices to his volume, the only such material not written by Toynbee himself included in his work. . . .

The revisions Toynbee referred to in his letter go to the very heart of what it means to be a Jew. To Toynbee, Judaism now appeared as a vital spiritual force and the living mission of the Jews was to carry forward the prophetic ideal. For Rabbi Agus, the essence of being Jewish is to engage in the task of building the "Kingdom of Heaven" here on earth. The kingdom is built by the ever-unfolding knowledge that God's presence supports . . . all of life and that human life is fulfilled through the ethical, aesthetic, and spiritual expression of God's will. In Rabbi Agus's view, this mission, while shared with all spiritually-minded and ethically-directed people, should be pursued by Jews along a specifically Jewish path as well as along the common paths open to all. . . .

ROBERT E. AGUS
Chevy Chase, Maryland

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Elie Kedourie assumes, I believe correctly, that traditional Judaism does not tolerate a canyon-like divide between the sacred and the secular, and . . . he points to the

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untraditional divorce of the ultra-Orthodox from the real world of politics, economics, and the non-sacerdotal.

Many years of thought on, and experience in, these matters have convinced me, however, that the Jewish position on the sacred and the secular, and the more specific question of the Torah-life based on charity and on not earning a livelihood, are not as clear-cut as we usually make them out to be.

For example, the Torah and the talmudic system flowing from it are, to be honest about it, totalitarian. They cover all of life and do not leave any pockets of experience open to non-Torah regulation. . . .

And yet the Torah does distinguish between *kodesh* (sacred) and *khol* (secular). A distinction is made between sacred times and ordinary days. . . .

Does the traditional Torah system recognize a separation between religion and state? On the one hand, no. The Sanhedrin is the ultimate authority on political matters. It ratifies the choice of kings. The Torah-*cum*-constitution takes everything within its purview—from war to hygiene, business, labor, prayer, and charity. There is no pluralism in religion any more than there can be pluralism in politics or in the structure of the state. . . .

On the other hand, yes. There are priests and laity. There are teachers and kings. There are precincts of the Temple and secular areas. There are religious wars and political wars. There is *avodah*, the sacred work of ritual in the Sanctuary, and there is *avodah*, labor in the field. Property can be sacred or profane. . . .

Now, with regard to working for a living as opposed to living off charity, there is a fundamental contradiction in the Code of Maimonides which I have never been able to resolve. In Chapter III, Halakhah 10 (*Hilkhot Talmud Torah*) Maimonides says:

> He who sets his heart upon studying Torah and not working, intending to live off charity, is desecrating the Name and shaming the Torah; extinguishing the light of religion, bringing harm upon himself, and losing his life in the future world. For it is forbidden to make use of the words of the Torah in this world. The sages said: he who makes use of the words of the Torah removes his life from the world. . . . They also commanded: love labor and hate leadership (*rabanut*), and all Torah that is not combined with work will in the end disintegrate and cause sin. . . .

In another famous passage, Maimonides goes to the opposite extreme. . . . At the end of *Hilchot Shemitah Veyovel*, Chapter XIII, Halakhah 12, he writes:

> Why did not the tribe of Levi share in the inheritance of the Land of Israel and in its spoils? Because [Levi] was separated to serve the Lord, to teach His ways, righteous and just, to the public. . . .
>
> And not only the tribe of Levi, but any man, from among all the people of the world, whose spirit moves him and whose intelligence guides him to isolate himself, in order to stand before the Lord, to serve Him, and to walk in the straight path as God meant for him to do, and he removes from himself the yoke of all the worldly calculations in which men indulge . . . such a man is sanctified with the holy of the holies, and the Lord will be his portion and inheritance forever and ever. . . .

What is this panegyric to the monastic life if not a rejection of everything in the ethical theory of Maimonides? It is a reversal of his grand theory of the golden mean, the path of moderation, in which he is critical of extreme religious orders and fraternities which separate themselves from ordinary community and existence. It certainly contradicts the idea of not gaining from Torah or from any aspect of God's service.

And yet, for all our admiration of the moderation of the Torah tradition, which Elie Kedourie and all of us share with Maimonides, and which in modern times especially we have been tempted to stress vis-à-vis Christianity, or cultism, or extremism of any kind—for all that, we are forced into a recognition of the peculiarly sacred, . . . despite our reluctance to bifurcate the world. Thus, we justify the existence of the synagogue as a precinct separated from lesser places in terms of sanctity. We approve the professional rabbinate and the entire infrastructure of religious charities. Even, or perhaps especially, in Israel, . . . there is a tremendous separation between religion and state, which, paradoxically, goes hand in hand with a tremendous identity of religion and state.

Of course, in Israel the rabbis have been given power in the areas of marriage, divorce, personal status, adoption, and inheritance. But it is clear that any political gifts to the religious parties . . . are at the expense of a complete divorce of ultimate state power from religious authority. Israel is a secular state. A majority of the Knesset can vote out all the religious concessions, abolish the office of the Chief Rabbinate and the rabbinical courts, and even contravene such basic laws as the one making the Sabbath the day of rest. . . . Mr. Kedourie comes to the same conclusion when he states at the end of his article: ". . . the Jewish state . . . is a secular state, something which rabbinic thought did not have to consider."

[Rabbi] Jacob Chinitz
Halifax, Nova Scotia

To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . Over the last two thousand years or so, rabbinic Judaism has regulated and sanctified the daily lives of Jews, ensuring Jewish survival, body and soul, community and individual. Does rabbinic Judaism measure up to the same task today? Elie Kedourie has strong doubts: ". . . The rabbinical universe of discourse has lost much of its traditional coherence, its customary parameters, and its familiar points of reference. . . ." He finds a ". . . divorce between . . . Torah and life" in the ultra-Orthodox sector of the community, rabbis who ". . . deem it desirable to escape from a life of doing, of working, of innovating, into a life of pure spirituality. . . ."

These generalizations have staggering implications. . . . Can it be that Mr. Kedourie equates an opting-out of the activities, values, and mores of Western life as a turning to "pure spirituality"? Does he interpret a refusal actively to participate in the day-to-day doings of Western civilization as a withdrawal from life's realities? Such an opting-out surely is not restricted to ultra-Orthodox rabbis. I think of myself as a member in good standing of the world of democratic Western capitalism, and yet find myself repeatedly compelled to put some considerable distance between myself and much of what is regarded as normal by most of those around me. My Judaism is a substantial part of the rationale for this dropping-out, but there are many other reasons, most of them having to do with what I perceive to be the very Western values that

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we are supposed to be preserving. . . .

RONALD GRUEN
Dallas, Texas

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Elie Kedourie is to be commended on his clear and precise analysis of the predicament of the Jew in the modern world, particularly with the advent of the state of Israel. Rightfully, Mr. Kedourie asserts, "It is crystal clear, then, that there can be no Jews without Judaism and that Judaism is what the rabbis have made and will make of it." Nevertheless, the rabbinic participation in the making of Judaism has been monopolized by the Orthodox rabbinate and, most particularly, by the ultra-Orthodox rabbinate in Israel. It is they who in their rigid and undeviating translation of ancient rabbinic tradition have caused the separation of the secular from the religious, the sacred from the profane, or in Mr. Kedourie's apt phrase, the Sabbath from the weekday. . . .

This was never the intention of the fathers of the Talmud. A fast-paging through the topics that are dealt with in the many tomes of the Talmud clearly reveals that the weekday was treated with the same religious and ethical fervor and passion as was the Sabbath. An early talmudic sage coined this proverb, "One who seeks to be a pious Jew should be thoroughly conversant with the laws of damages." Piety in the talmudic age found its suitable place for expression in the marketplace and in the courtroom as well as in the synagogue. Much of the polarization in Israel today between the "secular" community and the "religious" community is because the official rabbinate looks upon the transmitted rabbinic law as a sealed document not to be tampered with by those who are concerned with the workaday world. To put it in Mr. Kedourie's terms, whether in Mea Shearim or in the official rabbinic courts, the Sabbath is separated from the weekday.

Conservative Judaism, by contrast, sees itself as the heir of the talmudic tradition, open to the needs of the day and yet maintaining the integrity of the Halakhah. In the Israel setting, Conservatism has become known as *Masorti* [traditional] Judaism. Conservative/*Masorti* Judaism affirms that Halakhah is essential to Judaism and, hence, dare not be passive. If the Halakhah is to be a living organism, there must be ongoing interpretation, extension, and legislation. The Halakhah was never meant to be static. . . .

Judaism, in fact, is a partnership between that which is conceived by rabbis and lived by committed, caring, and concerned Jews. . . . This relationship is a source of the strength and cohesiveness of the Jewish community, and it has been so throughout the greater part of Jewish history. Conservative/*Masorti* Judaism seeks now to continue and strengthen this process.

It is to be hoped that Mr. Kedourie's words will be heeded. . . . The *Masorti*/Conservative movement, as it has in the past hundred years on the American continent, seeks now to lead in the revitalization of religious life in Israel.

[Rabbi] BENJAMIN Z. KREITMAN
Executive Vice President

FRANKLIN D. KREUTZER
International President
United Synagogue of America
New York City

ELIE KEDOURIE writes:

I am very grateful to the writers of the letters printed above, each one of which raises important issues.

It is indeed the case, as Robert E. Agus writes, that Rabbi Jacob Agus sought, with some success, to instruct Toynbee about Judaism and Jewish history. Volume 12 of *A Study of History* (not Volume 11, as stated by Mr. Agus) bears the marks of his tuition, as it does of Toynbee's belated discovery of works such as those by R.T. Herford and G.F. Moore. In this volume, entitled *Reconsiderations*, Toynbee briefly adumbrated the position, which he was to state more fully and emphatically in the 1972 abridgment, that Jewish Diaspora life represents the wave of the future. But, as I say in my article, Toynbee's later position is inexplicable in terms of his scheme—one to which he remained attached to the end. In this scheme the Jews figure as a fossil of an extinct "Syriac" civilization, and Judaism as an ossified religion. (If the term fossil gave offense, Toynbee kindly proposed—in his *Reconsiderations*—to substitute for it the word "coelacanthus" which denotes "an antediluvian living organism.")

The notion of Jews as a fossil figures prominently in the same

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volume which quotes criticisms by Rabbi Agus and others. However, if Jews are a coelacanthus, they cannot also be in the vanguard of modern civilization. That Toynbee came to hold these two irreconcilable notions—one an essential part of his original scheme, and the other seemingly an afterthought—is only one example of the pernicious confusions his writings have promoted. He is far from a "giant."

As regards Rabbi Jacob Chinitz's letter, it seems to me that there is no necessary contradiction between the two passages from Maimonides which he quotes. In the first, Maimonides forbids making the study of the Torah a means of livelihood; in the second, he exalts the religious vocation. But a man with such a vocation will, *a fortiori*, refrain from making it a source of livelihood. Maimonides does not seem to me to be advocating monasticism, nor does a monastic way of life necessarily follow from his language. To be a saint and, say, a shoemaker, is in no way self-contradictory.

I would not, myself, use the word totalitarian to describe what Rabbi Chinitz calls the talmudic system. The word is a modern coinage, with modern political connotations. The mind-set of traditional Judaism saw all human activity as being regulated by a divine dispensation, but this by no means obliterated the distinction between different functions and duties within society, as the instances quoted by Rabbi Chinitz themselves show.

"Capitalism" and "Western values," to which Ronald Gruen refers, I did not discuss or mention in my article. The opting-out which I was discussing is not simply an opting-out of "Western values," but out of any existing political or social institutions whatever. It is one in which, in forswearing all human activity in its immense variety in order to withdraw into a purely spiritual life, ends up becoming an untenable and destructive paradox. A purely spiritual life is impossible to sustain, as so many "communes" set up by "dropouts"—to take a contemporary Western example—have again and again painfully discovered.

Rabbi Benjamin Z. Kreitman and Franklin D. Kreutzer point up, from the perspective of Conservative Judaism, one of the issues discussed in my article, namely, the dangerous separation between the outlook of Jews living in a modern, secular, world and religious discourse. I myself do not know how the separation may be overcome. What I do believe is that the articulation of religious discourse is the responsibility of men learned in the Torah, whether "Orthodox" or other, who have to draw on the resources of tradition, in order to speak to pressing social and political issues, in language which can evoke a response from those confronting these issues in their daily life. In justice to them, it has been said that many of these issues are quite novel, and did not have to be addressed until fairly recently. The difficulty is daunting, but a living tradition will find within itself the resources necessary for renewal and innovation.

Nazi War Criminals

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I seem to have struck a raw nerve. In "Did the U.S. Recruit Nazi War Criminals?" [June], George Szamuely says that my book *Blowback* is a "paranoid fantasy, . . . a nasty, rambling hodgepodge" that is rife with "distortions, . . . character assassination, and slander of entire nations." He claims that the thesis of my book is that any opposition to Soviet expansionism is "Nazi."

Wrong. In fact, the thesis of *Blowback* is quite simple. During the cold war, the National Security Council and the CIA made a series of decisions to promote anti-Communist "Captive Nations" émigré organizations from the USSR and Eastern Europe regardless of whether a given group had actively supported Nazi Germany or had participated in the Holocaust. A related program recruited Nazi Germany's covert-warfare and intelligence specialists. The government's secret assistance is now known to have included money, publicity, falsified documentation, immigration assistance, and, in some cases, de facto protection from prosecution for crimes against humanity.

In addition to the obvious legal and moral questions raised by these programs, it is clear today that they achieved consistently counterproductive results. They set back efforts to build stable, independent, and democratic states in Eastern Europe. Further, they helped smooth the way for thousands of Nazi criminals to escape justice.

The book repeatedly makes an explicit distinction between the anti-Semitic cadre organizations that had been willing Nazi pawns during the war and the many Eastern European political groups that refused to participate in criminal activity. It presents new information concerning the USSR's recruitment of Nazis, and explains how the Soviet NKVD's own crimes against humanity appear to have played a substantial role in the USSR's decision to refuse to cooperate with most Western war-crimes investigations.

Perhaps most relevant to the present discussion, the text also shows how mainstream groups in the U.S. have sometimes failed to come to grips with the problem of genuine extremists in the postwar immigration.

For example, the annual Captive Nations Day commemorations enjoy endorsements from the President of the U.S., the governor of New York, and from some of COMMENTARY's most respected writers. Yet the fact is that prominent Captive Nations Committee leaders in New York, Boston, and Philadelphia have long been vocal anti-Semites who use these occasions to deliver "Jews-stabbed-us-in-the-back" speeches or to distribute brownshirt-style propaganda.

The chairman of the New England Captive Nations Committee, Jozef Mlot-Mroz, for example, publishes hate literature claiming that "Communism is Jewish," while in New York, local officers Horst Uhlich, Nicholas Nazarenko, and Edward Rubel have used the annual parade down Fifth Avenue to promote their belief that the U.S. Justice Department is "distributing Communist party propaganda in the U.S." when it brings Nazi criminals to trial. Nazarenko, New York's longtime Captive Nations Day Parade chairman, has publicly stated that the Nazi concentration camps were a desirable security measure and that an international Jewish conspiracy is the guiding force behind the Communist parties in Eastern Europe. Philadelphia's Captive Nations chairman for more than fifteen years until his death was Austin App, author of *The Six Million Swindle* and other basic works of the "Holocaust-never-happened" school of historical revisionism. Similar attitudes are a pervasive part of the Captive Nations movement throughout the U.S., and have been for many years.

Even so, these groups continue to enjoy favorable media coverage, endorsements from leading political figures, and a substantial role

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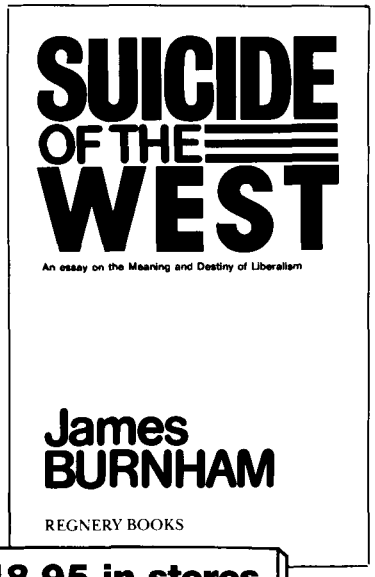

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in right-wing political coalitions year after year. The reasons for this phenomena are complex, but they stem in large measure from these organizations' ability to use militant anti-Communism as a "respectable" cover for hate politics.

Would Mr. Szamuely have us simply ignore this trend in the interests of his version of anti-Communist unity? Or is he perhaps less well-informed about the movement he leaps to defend than he would have us believe?

CHRISTOPHER SIMPSON
Mt. Rainier, Maryland

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

George Szamuely makes a lame attempt to convince us that investigations of Nazi war criminals in the U.S. are part of a renewed "revisionist" interpretation of the origins of the cold war. . . . In the process, he promotes his own version of historical revisionism, first by doubting the evidence of active recruitment of Nazis by the United States in the aftermath of World War II, . . . then by minimizing that evidence by ascribing the employment of notorious Nazis to . . . "naiveté on the part of the officials involved.". . .

Mr. Szamuely further muddles the issue by lumping together the Gestapo criminals used as spies by our Counter-Intelligence Corps (CIC) in occupied Germany and Austria, the more than 1,000 Nazi scientists employed in the U.S. by the Pentagon, the Nazi experts on biological and chemical warfare brought here illegally to apply their knowledge gained through human experiments in the concentration camps, as well as Baltic and Ukrainian war criminals who immigrated here under false pretenses via an Act of Congress granting them preferential treatment.

It is in connection with these East European Nazi collaborators that Mr. Szamuely makes some outrageous accusations against Elizabeth Holtzman, who was instrumental in creating the Office of Special Investigations (OSI) to ferret out Nazi criminals, and Allan A. Ryan, former director of that agency. Ryan estimates in his book, *Quiet Neighbors: Prosecuting Nazi War Criminals in America*, that about 10,000 Nazi war criminals came to the U.S., most of them Balts, Ukrainians, and Byelorussians. They were the executioners of the Jewish people, often outdoing the SS in their brutality. Toward the end of the war they fled to the West, ahead of the advancing Soviet army, along with their families and the gold and jewelry they had looted from their Jewish victims. They settled in Germany in comfort, and when the Allies occupied defeated Germany, these East Europeans refused to return to their homelands under Soviet rule. Their refusal of repatriation was based on fear of punishment by the Soviets for their collaboration with the Nazis, not on their alleged anti-Communism, as Mr. Szamuely tries to imply.

His claim that the OSI investigations have had "the unfortunate effect of persuading the American public that there was, and is, something disreputable in the longing of these nations to rid themselves of the Communism imposed on them from without," is contrived and ludicrous. These criminals immigrated to the U.S. to escape justice and find a good life, not because of any idealistic longing to liberate their countries from Moscow rule. . . .

The Holtzman bill provided for the deportation of those who had lied about their Nazi past in their immigration papers, not of those who longed for freedom in their homelands. To imply some sinister motivation on the part of Holtzman and Ryan is reprehensible innuendo. . . . Mr. Szamuely is not impressed by the figure of 19 people deported under the Holtzman bill ("Not exactly a figure to inspire alarm," he writes), but he does voice alarm over the effects of "lurid imagery" and "loose language" employed by Holtzman and Ryan on the reputation of the Baltic countries.

Mr. Szamuely flatly states that "no war criminals were recruited." According to him, the employment of Klaus Barbie, the Gestapo chief and "Butcher of Lyon," by the CIC for more than four years was an isolated case, a result of the CIC's "naiveté." He fails to mention that Barbie had managed a network of spies for the Americans, consisting of about 50 SS officers, that the "naive" CIC had kept this association secret from the higher army echelon, that the French government had made numerous requests for Barbie's extradition based on his criminal record. . . .

Equally disturbing is Mr. Szamuely's attitude toward the case of the roughly 1,000 German scientists, including the celebrated team of rocket experts headed by Wernher von Braun. Most of the scientists had been classified by U.S. interrogators in Germany as potential security threats, yet they were employed in the U.S. on highly secret defense projects. In his cavalier treatment of the subject, Mr. Szamuely seems to accept the scientists' own assurances of their innocence in the death of 20,000 slave laborers of the Dora/Nordhausen camps employed in the rocket factory headed by von Braun and his colleagues. "They [the scientists] knew conditions were terrible," he writes, "but what could they do?"

Von Braun was a major in SS uniform, as were the other experts and managers. They wielded considerable power and could easily have influenced the behavior of the SS guards toward the 60,000 prisoners working on their project. I know, for I worked as a slave laborer on one of these subterranean "secret weapon" programs. The disciplined SS guards would not disobey orders from their superior officers.

The truth is that the scientists and experts, in their race to produce miracle weapons for Hitler, enthusiastically accepted concentration-camp prisoners to work them to death. They collaborated in their brutal treatment to speed up tunnel construction. Surviving witnesses tell of frequent hangings and torture in the factory, attended by the scientists. Arthur Rudolph, Georg Rickhey, and other members of the rocket team were war criminals wanted by the Nuremberg Tribunal. Yet the Pentagon falsified their criminal records to bypass our laws against admitting top Nazis. . . .

Aside from the rocket and space experts, dozens of Nazi doctors and pseudo-scientists were brought to the U.S. to work on chemical and biological warfare research for our military. Many of them had committed the most barbaric crimes—experimenting on hundreds of human guinea pigs in the Dachau concentration camp. The victims had been tortured to death in low-pressure chambers and by exposure to extreme cold in aviation research of a dubious value. Mr. Szamuely, while referring to only three of these scientists illegally brought to the U.S. (Hubertus Strughold, Kurt Blome, and Walter Schreiber) says that they "had known about" or were "alleged to have witnessed human experiments," when in fact it has been established that they initiated and conducted the experiments in Dachau.

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The saddest part of the entire issue is that while the U.S. government was coddling Nazi war criminals and bringing them to the United States where they and their families were given substantial privileges, their victims vegetated in DP camps, unwanted and without hope. I was one of the surviving victims of Dachau whom at least one of our "liberators," General George S. Patton, Jr., considered "less than human."...

Mr. Szamuely fails to mention that while freely admitting pogromists, hangmen, and Nazi criminals, the U.S. government denied immigration to Jews. And when Congress finally enacted the Displaced Persons Act of 1948, it favored Balts, Ukrainians, and Volksdeutsche, but discriminated against Jewish Holocaust survivors.

ALFRED LIPSON
Bayside, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

... I am not persuaded by George Szamuely's attempts to portray members of the Nazi SS as scientists, and Nazi collaborators from the Baltic states and Eastern Europe as victims of the Soviets, while making the Soviets villains....

SS Major Wernher von Braun and company did not earn their rank by taking civil-service examinations. They were first Nazis, then Germans, and then scientists. A secret that was revealed only recently has been known to survivors since 1945: the SS major and his Nazi friends had personal knowledge of the horrors taking place in the tunnels and in the death camps of Nordhausen and Dora. As a high-ranking SS officer, von Braun had life-and-death power over the victims and, in addition to rocketry, he had to plan ahead to keep up with the rapid personnel turnover. As one who worked in the tunnels of Gusen II, I can assure you that the life expectancy of a worker under those conditions was about two weeks....

The Nazis, ... despite their brilliant scientists, lost the war. After the war ended, the guilty Nazi scientists expected a Russian firing squad; therefore, and for no other reason, they surrendered to the American side.

In 1945 these "scientists" became our trusted friends. We placed our space program in their hands.... Unlike the Soviets, however, we allowed these Nazis to influence our costly space goals ... [and] our space program fell behind that of the Soviets....

As for Mr. Szamuely's claim that Slavic and Baltic "nationalists" did not collaborate with the Nazis ..., throughout Eastern Europe "volunteers" participated in the murder of civilians and POW's at a ratio of one German to ten or more natives. When the Soviets drew near, most escaped to the West, were given false identities, and became known as anti-Communists....

When the war with the Soviets began, the Nazis had no need to force Eastern Europeans and others to join their death squads. Many did the job on their own before the Germans entered and after the Soviets had left. The Nazis had to put a stop to this wild saturnalia and create "order" out of the chaos which was interfering with the conduct of the war. Thereafter, the Nazis tapped the enthusiastic support of the native population ... to implement their "Final Solution." They also built most of their death camps in Eastern Europe with the support of the collaborators. And these were the people we sheltered all these years as citizens of the U.S....

JAN REYNOLDS
Riverdale, New York

GEORGE SZAMUELY writes:

Christopher Simpson proudly claims to have "struck a raw nerve," and he is certainly right about that. But he really ought to restrain his habit of projecting his own obsessiveness onto others. By what convoluted reasoning does he arrive at the conclusion that I was leaping "to defend" the Assembly of Captive European Nations—an organization I mentioned only in passing in my essay? Let me relieve him of his suspicions that my objections to his book had something to do with my own or, for that matter, anyone else's version of "anti-Communist unity" (whatever that might mean). *Blowback* is a bad book. It is poorly reasoned, unfair, and intellectually dishonest. Unlike, say, the work of Tom Bower and Allan A. Ryan, Mr. Simpson's enterprise adds little to our understanding of the origins and complex nature of the utilization of former Nazis and Nazi col-

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laborators by agencies of the U.S. government after the war. This is not surprising, since Mr. Simpson is obviously only really interested in his own political agenda: namely, to discredit anti-Communism.

Mr. Simpson's bizarre syllogism in his book seems to run like this: Nazi Germany invaded the Soviet Union. For a very short time, the Nazis, for expedient reasons of their own, pretended that their only goal was to liberate the peoples of the Soviet Union from Communist tyranny. Therefore, anyone who now advocates the liberation of anyone anywhere in the world from Communist tyranny, is in effect carrying out a Nazi program.

Just a few sentences selected at random from Mr. Simpson's book will illustrate the tendentiousness of his connections. Over and over again he makes it appear as if the American public was being swayed from a benevolent disposition toward the Soviet Union by pro-Nazi propagandists:

> The genesis of the liberation [of Eastern Europe] philosophy can be clearly traced to émigré propagandists who had worked for the Nazis.
>
> Their adoption of lip-service to democracy began to provide former fascists with a platform to promote their agenda to millions of Americans.
>
> The role of former Nazi collaborators and U.S. intelligence agencies in promoting the penetration of liberationist political thinking into the American body politic may be traced through several clear steps.

And the perfidy continues unto the present day:

> Today the Reagan administration has updated liberationism to apply to 1980's crisis points like Angola and Nicaragua.
>
> The CIA's present techniques for virtually every type of covert operation . . . were first formulated during the Agency's work with Eastern European collaborationist troops it inherited from the Nazis.

Mr. Simpson is seriously deluded if he really believes that but for the activities of émigré groups abroad, the Soviets would have relinquished their control over Eastern Europe and the Communists would have felt themselves under no compulsion to seize power. The truth is that no matter how many Nazi collaborators may at one time or other have offered their services to U.S. intelligence agencies, events in Eastern Europe moved along with their own inexorable Stalinist logic. Much the same could be said of the supposed influence émigré groups may have had on U.S. attitudes and policy toward the Soviet Union. At no time—not during the Berlin Blockade, or the Korean war, or the "loss" of China—did U.S. policy-makers ever depart from the defensive premises of the policy of containment, whatever occasional verbal swagger of "liberation" and "rollback" some politicians were given to. And after Stalin's death, when the new Soviet leadership indicated a desire to improve relations with the West, even much of this rhetoric was dropped. Consequently, there does seem to be something bizarre about Mr. Simpson's fretting now over the Assembly of Captive European Nations, to the extent of giving over half his letter to the subject.

Alfred Lipson claims I made "outrageous accusations" and employed "reprehensible innuendo" in my criticism of Allan A. Ryan and Elizabeth Holtzman. The truth is that though I admire Ryan's passion for justice and applaud the diligence with which the OSI has tracked down suspected Nazi war criminals, it is important not merely to be on the right side but also to do the right thing. For instance, when Ryan proclaims that 10,000 Nazi war criminals found their way to the United States, it would be reassuring if the source of this estimate were a bit firmer than his guess that the figure must have been 2½ percent of the 400,000 immigrants who entered the country under the Displaced Persons Act.

There are also a number of troubling aspects to the close liaison between the OSI and Soviet judicial authorities, which have been detailed elsewhere, particularly in the Los Angeles *Times*, in two long articles by its staff writer, Robert Gillette (April 27-28, 1986). Apart from the relative inaccessibility of Soviet archives and witnesses to U.S. investigators, there is also the refusal on the part of the OSI to countenance any suspicions of the Russians' motives in coming up with evidence against a particular individual at a time of their own choosing. In the end, though, as I mentioned in my article, only 19 people have been deported or pressured into leaving (incidentally, not for having committed war crimes, but for having lied to the immigration authorities when they entered the country). As a result of a lot of what is indeed very "lurid imagery, loose language, and guilt-by-association reasoning" a cloud of undeserved suspicion does in fact hang over a number of émigré communities.

Unfortunately, neither Mr. Lipson nor Jan Reynolds wants to get beyond a straightforward tussle between the forces of light and the forces of darkness. According to Mr. Lipson, the U.S. government was "coddling Nazi war criminals and bringing them to the United States"; according to Mr. Reynolds, the East Europeans were the real genocidalists, possibly worse than the Nazis, and it was these people we "sheltered all these years as citizens of the U.S." Whatever reservations I may have about certain aspects of his work, I must quote Ryan at this point to bring a sense of reality to this discussion:

> I gravely doubt that there was ever any organized or widespread conspiracy to bring Nazi war criminals to this country, for any purpose. Nazi criminals by definition were subject to trial and punishment by the Allies after the war and so they were in no position to bargain for generous rewards such as entry to the United States. . . . [T]he manifest improbability of the whole idea, combined with the utter lack of reputable evidence to date that any such plan ever actually existed, certainly puts the burden of proving its existence on those who would have us believe it. . . .

It is important to maintain distinctions. Some Nazis, Nazi collaborators, and even Nazi war criminals did find their way to these shores, but it came about through negligence rather than mendacity. Similarly, the evidence still seems to indicate that during the time Klaus Barbie was in the employ of the CIC he was not suspected of being a war criminal.

Finally, to the matter of Wernher von Braun. Although I do not particularly wish to defend him, I am a little surprised by Mr. Reynolds's claim that von Braun and his colleagues were "first Nazis, then Germans, and then scientists." I am even more astonished by his dismissal of von Braun's contribution to the U.S. space program. But I do know that Mr. Reynolds is wrong in believing that the "Nazi

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scientists expected a Russian firing squad." As I pointed out in my article, the Russians were eager to get their hands on any scientist, whether a civilian or a member of the military, in the hope of utilizing his talents. And Mr. Lipson is wrong when he says that Arthur Rudolph "and other members of the rocket team were war criminals wanted by the Nuremberg Tribunal." In the Nordhausen/Dora trial of August 1947, along with the SS guards, only Georg Rickhey, director of production at Nordhausen, was a defendant. Neither Arthur Rudolph nor any of the other scientists was "wanted." In other words, the question still remains, if they were not to be put on trial as war criminals, what was to be done with them? They could be allowed to go and work in the Soviet Union, or they could be allowed to return to Germany and help build up the scientific and industrial power of a vanquished enemy, or they could be put to use in the United States—as a legitimate instance of war reparations, one might say.

World War I

To the Editor of Commentary:

Donald Kagan, in his article, "The First Revisionist Historian" [May], as well as in earlier pieces, especially "World War I, World War II, World War III" [March 1987], hammers home his thesis that the World War I revisionists were wrong, and that Germany and Austria were in fact the prime culprits in 1914. Mr. Kagan also scoffs at revisionist historians, without naming any, who have asserted that British and American "merchants of death" were primarily reponsible for the war.

I have been a student of the revisionists . . . since the late 1950's and I have yet to uncover one guilty as charged. Sidney Fay, G. Lowes Dickenson, Walter Lippmann, John Maynard Keynes, Harry Elmer Barnes, and half-a-dozen others with whom I am familiar all pretty much maintain the same thing, i.e., that Russia and France were first and second in order of guilt for World War I. And George Kennan says or implies the same in his new book on the Franco-Russian alliance. Both France and Russia were revanchist, France toward Germany and Russia toward Austria-Hungary. Austria wanted a local punitive war but ardently hoped to limit it. Germany, England, and Italy were opposed to any kind of war after July 26, 1914, but were too dilatory to avert it.

The powers of the Entente, Britain, Russia, and France, said that the offense was Germany's backing of Austria; the Germans said the offense was Russia's backing of Serbia. Nearly all the revisionists have maintained that the German position was more reasonable, and that the Russians did not choose to localize the war. Only Serbia, Russia, and France wanted a generalized European war and worked to secure it. Russia mobilized not only along the Austrian border but along the German border, and Germany knew that under the terms of the Franco-Russian alliance mobilization meant war. France's technical success in waiting until the declaration of war came from Germany does not alter the reality.

There were other causes of the war, conceded by almost all historians, such as British-German military and trade rivalry. . . . But Germany and Austria were essentially sated powers, more so than Russia and France.

Beverly C. Meyer
Walnut Creek, California

Donald Kagan writes:

Beverly C. Meyer's complaint against my assignment of primary responsibility for World War I to Germany deserves a longer answer than I can give here. Fortunately, such answers have long been available to those who cared to follow the argument beyond the revisionist consensus formed in the 1930's and ratified in the 1950's. It was not necessary to wait for Fritz Fischer's attack on the orthodoxy in the late 50's and thereafter to discover the shabbiness of the case in defense of Germany. Luigi Albertini's masterpiece in three large volumes filled with documents, interviews with participants, and hard, clear reason demolished the revisionist view when it was first published in the 1940's (the English version appeared between 1952 and 1957). Since then the evidence and arguments produced by Fischer and his school have come to dominate the scene among professional historians in all countries. Whether one accepts the more extreme aspects of his interpretation that charges Germany with deliberately planning a war of conquest, or a milder version that accuses the Germans of launching a preventive war to forestall the threat of growing Russian power, or neither of these, there is a broad consensus that the chief responsibility for the war belongs to Germany.

Still, consensuses of experts have been wrong before, as, indeed, Albertini, Fischer, and I in my articles have argued. Let me list, therefore, some of the reasons for my opinion. If we begin with the crisis of July 1914 following the assassination of the Austrian heir to the throne, we find that Germany not only gave the Austrians a "blank check" to attack Serbia but actually pushed its hesitating ally forward. The Germans did so in full knowledge that such a war, which they hoped to isolate from the participation of the other great powers, could well bring a war with Russia and its ally France and more than likely involve England as well. They were, in spite of their deliberately deceptive denials, thoroughly informed about Austria's plan to present demands to Serbia that amounted to an ultimatum and were specifically intended to be unacceptable. The Austrians had expected to delay a declaration of war until August 12, when their mobilization would be complete, but when the Serbian reply proved to be stunningly conciliatory, the Germans urged Austria to declare war at once to prevent other powers from intervening by proposing negotiations. When it became clear that Russia and its allies would not allow the Austrians to crush Serbia, Germany did not shrink from the consequences but refused all opportunities for conferences and negotiations. Thereafter, all conciliatory gestures from Germany were fraudulent, aiming to place the blame for the coming war on Russia and thereby to keep Britain out of it and to win internal support for it in Germany.

The chief argument clung to by the revisionists is that Russia was the first major power to mobilize and that mobilization was known to mean war, but that argument does not withstand scrutiny. German military leaders anxiously waited and hoped for the Russians to mobilize and give them an excuse to move. After the mobilization, the German Chancellor admitted that "although the Russian mobilization has been declared, its mobilization measures cannot be compared with those of the West European states. . . . Moreover, Russia does not intend to wage war, but has only been forced to take these measures because of Austria." D.C.B. Lieven, a recent stu-

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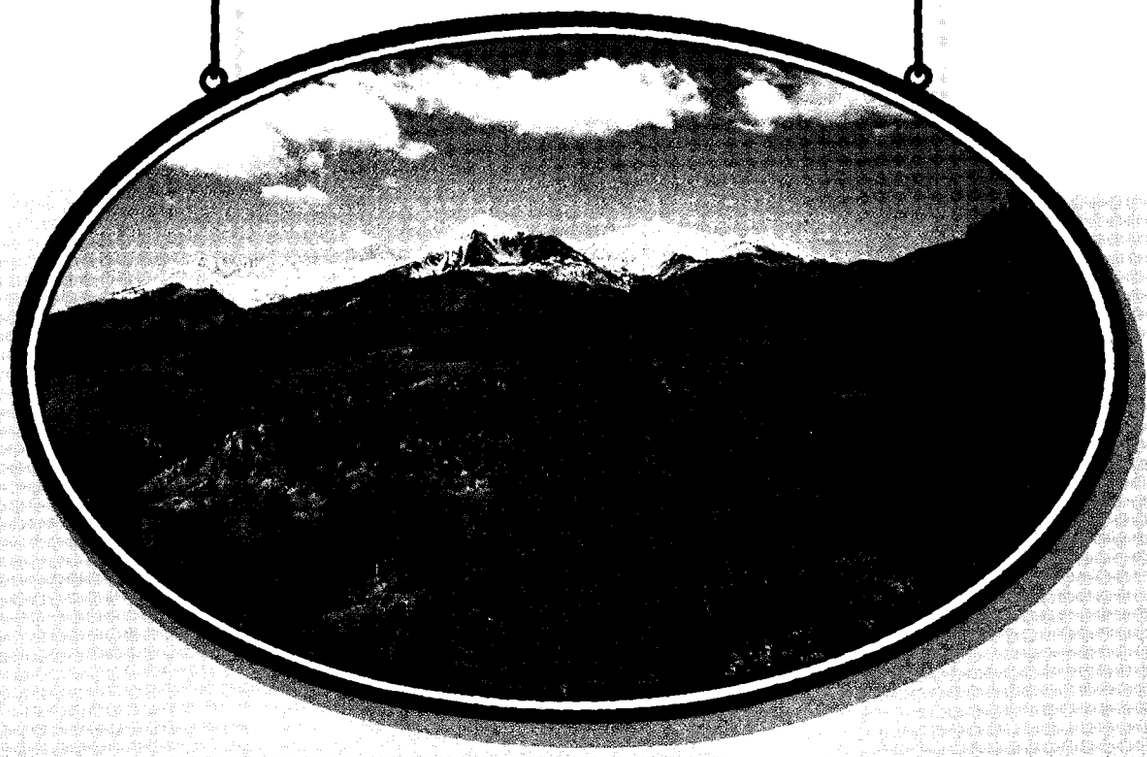

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dent of the Russian part in the coming of the war, points out that the Chancellor was preparing to send the Russians what amounted to an ultimatum even before he heard of the general mobilization, that the Russians would certainly have rejected it, and that war would have ensued. Few would disagree with his conclusion that "Study of the July crisis from the Russian standpoint indeed confirms the now generally accepted view that the major immediate responsibility for the outbreak of the war rested unequivocally on the German government" (*Russia and the Origins of the First World War*, London, 1983).

If we look beyond the July crisis to longer-range causes, the case against Germany seems no less clear. The formation of two sets of alliances that created the danger of a local conflict bursting into a major war was chiefly Germany's doing. Its pursuit of economic and even political domination of Europe is well documented, and its achievement would require war with Russia and France. Its pursuit of a world policy required conflict with Britain, and its naval policy caused the British to join with their traditional enemies to meet the threat. Repeated British attempts at rapprochement were rejected because the Germans were unwilling to abandon the naval race and the threat it posed. No other nation had goals and policies incompatible with the peace of Europe. In the same way, only Germany had military plans that in themselves contributed to the outbreak and spread of war. It was the Schlieffen Plan that made mobilization mean war, made extended diplomacy and negotiation impossible, and guaranteed that Britain would be involved. In all major respects, therefore, Germany seems clearly to have been more responsible for the war than anyone else.

Beverly C. Meyer also says that I "scoff at revisionist historians," without naming any, who have asserted that British and American "merchants of death" were primarily responsible for the war. Let me call attention to a book published in 1934 called, in fact, *Merchants of Death*, written by H.C. Englebrecht and F.C. Hanighen. It is full of statements blaming arms makers and the bankers that support them for war. Here is a sample:

> . . . It is not contended here that the United States fought in the World War solely because of its armament makers and their financiers. There were many other factors in the situation. Yet the question of Hamilton Fish, Jr., is more pertinent than is generally admitted: "Is it not a fact that the World War was started by the shipment of munitions? . . . Was not the cause of the war our continual shipping of munitions abroad?" American commitments with the Allies were so enormous that only our entry into the war saved the country from economic collapse.

Arms makers were said to follow two axioms: "When there are wars, prolong them; when there is peace, disturb it." The authors conclude as follows:

> The skies are again overcast with lowering war clouds and the Four Horsemen are again getting ready to ride, leaving destruction, suffering, and death in their path. Wars are man-made, and peace, when it comes, will also be man-made. Surely the challenge of war and of the armament maker is one that no intelligent or civilized being can evade.

The book was chosen as a Book-of-the-Month Club selection and it played a large part in establishing a Senate committee to investigate the munitions industry under the chairmanship of the arch-isolationist Gerald P. Nye. *Merchants of Death* benefited from a foreword by a well-known American historian who praised and recommended it. He agreed with the authors in genral, but emphasized that

> even though the armament makers have played a prominent part in encouraging wars, rebellions, and border raids, they never exerted an influence upon the promotion of warfare as did our American bankers between 1914 and 1917. Through their pressure to put the United States into the War these bankers brought about results which have well-nigh wrecked the contemporary world.

Those words were written by Harry Elmer Barnes, one of the most influential of the American revisionists.

Anti-Missile Defense

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Stephen Peter Rosen, in his review of *While Others Build* [Books in Review, June], criticizes both me as the author of the book and my role in public affairs. I have never

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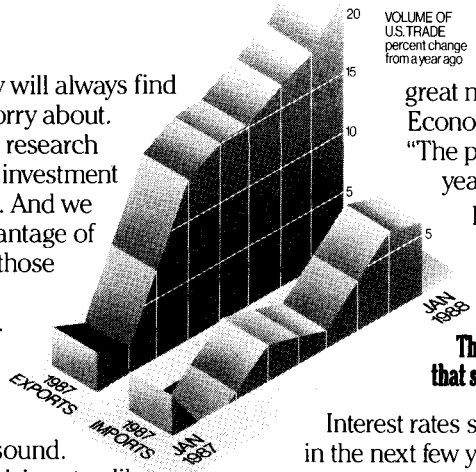
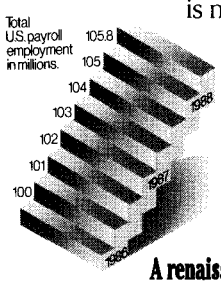
With so many things to worry about why are we so optimistic?

Those inclined to worry will always find things in the economy to worry about. But the fact is, Merrill Lynch research shows that many untapped investment opportunities are unfolding. And we believe the time to take advantage of them has arrived. Here are those trends. And what the astute investor can do about them.



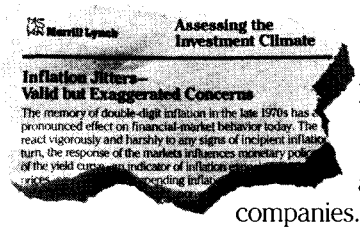
Economic forecast: Up, down, then up again.

The basic economy is sound. Personal income has been rising steadily for the last few years. The unemployment rate is near a 14-year low, and the gross national product is advancing at a healthy pace. While our research shows the possibility of a recession next year, it should be modest in length and degree. And economic growth should resume by the end of 1989.



A renaissance of optimism for U.S. capital spending.

The American economy is undergoing a major change: the Industrial Renaissance. Exports are growing strongly. That means a rise in orders for American capital goods and an excellent long-term opportunity to profit from the rebuilding of our industrial base.


Merrill Lynch
Assessing the Investment Climate
Inflation Jitters—Valid but Exaggerated Concerns
The memory of double-digit inflation in the late 1970s has a pronounced effect on financial-market behavior today. The react vigorously and harshly to any signs of incipient inflatio turn, the response of the markets influences monetary polic of the yield curve as an indicator of inflation and spending inflat

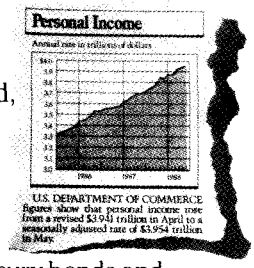
We also see emerging opportunities in selected high-yielding stocks such as those of utilities and insurance companies. And, as Merrill Lynch Chief Investment Strategist Charles I. Clough points out, "Foreign investment flows into dollar-denominated financial assets are likely to be increasingly supportive of the U.S. financial markets."

Inflation is up. But not severely.

While the drought in the Midwest is boosting food prices, the overall effect should be neither great nor long-lasting. As our Chief Economist Don Straszheim puts it, "The peak inflation rate, based on year-to-year changes in consumer prices, is likely to be about 5.5%, far below the 14.5% peak in the second quarter of 1980."

The interest rate outlook. Something that should make everyone feel optimistic.

Interest rates should decline substantially in the next few years. This would be spurred by moderating inflation, slower economic growth in 1989, and a rising surplus in the Social Security trust fund, which will make the government a bigger customer for its own debt, reducing the amount it must raise from the public.


Personal Income
Annual rate in trillions of dollars
1986
1987
1988
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE figures show that personal income rose from a revised $3.941 trillion in April to a seasonally adjusted rate of $3.954 trillion in May.

This means that U.S. Treasury bonds and high-quality corporate and municipal bonds—which are now paying healthy interest rates—are also likely to increase considerably in value.

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met, spoken, or corresponded with Mr. Rosen; and his review shows he is not much better acquainted with my book than he is with me. *While Others Build* tells the story of how the U.S. developed enough technology to protect us against ballistic missiles, and of how the Pentagon bureaucracy has thus far prevented that technology from being used. Although I had something to do with this story, I kept myself out of the book as much as possible. Mr. Rosen, however, avoids the substance of the book and features me prominently—but inaccurately.

Mr. Rosen characterizes me as a gadfly who did some good in Washington by asking first-order questions about the performance of U.S. intelligence in wartime, and who then asked similar questions about anti-missile defense. It would be almost as inappropriate for me to detail my accomplishments during eight years on the Senate Intelligence Committee staff as it was gratuitous for Mr. Rosen to suggest I lacked breadth, depth, and experience. My classified work in intelligence is reflected in the seven-volume series, *Intelligence Requirements for the 1980's*, edited by Roy Godson, of which I am the principal author. Does Mr. Rosen have a basis for belittling it?

While Others Build describes how in 1978 Senator Malcolm Wallop and I noticed that certain intelligence technologies could be applied to anti-missile defense. We then worked with the Carter administration, won some votes in Congress, and got some hardware built. Mr. Rosen reduces our role to that of asking questions. He also claims to have been involved himself in anti-missile defense work for a decade. All I can say is that neither I nor anyone I know in this field ever heard of him.

Mr. Rosen's first point is that I do no more than "assert that defenses would be strategically rational." But the entire book is packed with technical facts and figures. Through them I *argue*, for most of 256 pages, that the technology for building space-based lasers, space-based homing vehicles, and various ground-based interceptors has existed for some time. By innumerable examples, I show that the adequacy of technology, or lack thereof, depends on definitions, and I argue that the ones that have been used do not make sense. In a chapter entitled "The Numbers Game," I show (I think *ad nauseam*) how different assumptions produce different assessments of the effectiveness of the key technologies. Are my facts and figures correct or not? Are the specific inferences I draw proper or not? Mr. Rosen does not say. Without giving any evidence, he dismisses the bulk of the book as "too terse for the average reader." But why does he shun substantive discussion in favor of invidious labels?

The answer may be seen in his second point. Here he shows passion. He writes, almost correctly, that "the only heroes in Codevilla's book, other than [Senator] Malcolm Wallop, are the senior defense administrators of the Carter administration." Mr. Rosen, who served in the Reagan administration, implies that this is self-evidently absurd. But I argue that, rhetoric aside, U.S. anti-missile programs were closer to fruition at the end of the Carter administration than at the end of the Reagan administration. Mr. Rosen presents not a shred of evidence to the contrary. Nevertheless, he much resents my contradicting the popular image of the military and of the Reagan administration, calling it "intemperate and unfair."

I do argue at some length that the senior officers of the armed services have served their country badly with regard to anti-missile defense—for reasons much like those that Edward Luttwak has adduced in *The Pentagon and the Art of War*. I do sum up this argument by referring to Mosca's Iron Law of Bureaucracy. But for Mr. Rosen to misunderstand this as a charge of "venal" corruption is naive. If only the senior military were merely venal! Mr. Rosen's years in Washington should have taught him that money may be the least of the things that corrupt people in high places. Far more powerful is inertia—the urge to believe that today can be like yesterday, and tomorrow like today. Even more powerful is the urge to justify past decisions—one's own and the ones of the people who raised one up. The ever-present need to satisfy existing constituencies also tends to push new missions to the hindmost—or out of the picture altogether. At any rate, Mr. Rosen does not deny that the senior military is the principal opponent of anti-missile defense. He simply says that they have good reasons for their attitude—though he does not tell us what those reasons are, or why they are good.

Angelo M. Codevilla
Hoover Institution
Stanford, California

To the Editor of Commentary:

Stephen Peter Rosen asserts that Angelo M. Codevilla's explanation of why the U.S. has not built a strategic defense is wrong. Mr. Codevilla seeks to demonstrate that bureaucratic self-interest and poor political leadership are the key factors that explain why the U.S. has not deployed any existing weapons after a ten-year research program.

Mr. Codevilla makes a case. Mr. Rosen does not. He should provide some evidence to support his opinion (based on his unspecified experience), to explain or justify the failure of the U.S. military to resolve perhaps the most important postwar strategic dilemma to confront the U.S.

Roy Godson
Georgetown University
Washington, D.C.

Stephen Peter Rosen writes:

The interested reader can go back to my review of *While Others Build*. He will find that it is, on the whole, favorably disposed toward Angelo M. Codevilla's activities in the intelligence community and toward his call for deployed missile defenses. It laments his tendency to lash out intemperately in personal attacks on those who disagree with him, however gently, in ways which do the causes we both support more harm than good. His letter indicates that he continues to indulge this tendency. He should stop doing so.

With regard to Roy Godson, he is correct that Mr. Codevilla makes a case. That case rests on the assumption that Mr. Codevilla's arguments for deployment were so self-evidently true that failure to deploy had to result from venality or stupidity. My review noted that Mr. Codevilla's arguments for deployment had some specific weaknesses and concluded that his case was weak.

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Liberalism & American Jews

Irving Kristol

AMERICAN Jews, in their overwhelming majority, are politically rooted in a liberal tradition. That is presumably why, as Milton Himmelfarb has noted, Jews in this country have the economic status of white Anglo-Saxon Episcopalians but vote more like low-income Hispanics. How to explain this anomaly, unique in the American experience? The Irish and the Italians, as they move up the economic ladder, are far more likely to shed the urban-immigrant liberalism of their parents and grandparents, shifting rather predictably to one version or another of suburban conservatism (of which interest-group liberalism is a subspecies). They perceive their interests in a new way, and vote these interests. Such a shift is what a student of sociology would expect. Why has it not happened among America's Jews? Why are they so different? Is there a single answer that can serve as an explanation?

I think there is—though it is a single answer that is not a simple answer. It has to do with the meaning of that "liberalism" to which American Jews seem so stubbornly attached, a meaning that is itself a special compound of Jewish political history and Jewish religious history over the past two centuries. So powerful is this meaning that it has become, for many Jews, an integral aspect of their self-definition as Jews. There are now some signs that this self-definition is finally eroding in the face of a circumstantial reality that repels its solicitation. But it is interesting to note that Jews who move away from their familiar (and familial) liberalism still tend to describe themselves as "disillusioned," whereas their Irish and Italian counterparts find such a movement to be natural, not at all traumatic, and not calling for any self-conscious reflection.

To be disillusioned one must have had illusions. The liberalism of the modern Jew is one that has been especially rich in illusions. Obviously, those illusions have been not merely illusions—to retain the loyalty of Jews for so long a time, they had to be nourished by the real, outside world. "Jewish liberalism"—and the term is neither invidious nor inappropriate—is organically connected to a larger non-Jewish liberalism that has tended to dominate the intellectual (even spiritual) life of Western Europe ever since the French Revolution. It is the intensity and obstinacy of the Jewish commitment to this liberalism that is so special.

To this liberalism, and not to another. We are talking about Continental "radical" liberalism, the liberalism that gave rise to the French Revolution and which, stubbornly (if not altogether successfully) resisting opportunities for disillusionment, has remained loyal to the ideals of that revolution ever since. What was liberal about this liberalism was its opposition to monarchy and aristocracy, the *ancien régime* which was seen as oppressive, corrupt, and decadent. What was radical about this liberalism was the belief that a new order could be constructed, to be governed by a new, "enlightened" state which would be representative of man's finer instincts, his most elevated thoughts.

By the early decades of the 19th century, this belief began to incorporate a fundamental distrust and detestation of the market economy, which was perceived as incarnating self-interest as the guiding principle of the new social order. Such a focus on self-interest was thought to be inimical to "enlightened" government, which should be the master, not the servant, of social and economic realities. It is this polarity between "enlightened," powerful, intrusive government and the principle of self-interest as the bedrock of our economic system which is the driving force behind all modern socialism, whether in its social-democratic or Leninist versions.

There is, of course, another liberal tradition with a quite different conception of "liberalism." This is the Anglo-Scottish-American tradition, represented by such thinkers as John Locke, David Hume, Adam Smith, and the authors of *The Federalist Papers*. Though this tradition had a certain popularity in Continental Europe prior to the French Revolution, it has always been viewed by Continental liberalism as a mere prolegomenon to

IRVING KRISTOL is co-editor of the *Public Interest*, publisher of the *National Interest*, and author of, among other books, *Two Cheers for Capitalism* and *Reflections of a Neoconservative*. The present essay, in somewhat different form, will be included in a collection of essays in honor of Earl Raab, to be published in the spring of 1989 by Transaction Books, under the editorship of Seymour Martin Lipset.

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the more "authentic" and more radical liberal ideals emerging from the French Revolution.

In Anglo-Scottish-American liberalism, it is an enlightened, civil *society* that is prized, while *government* is regarded as a continuing threat to individual liberty—including the liberty to pursue, within a large sphere of action, one's self-interest. Such individual liberty is the root principle of this new order. In the end, it is whether one regards a "bourgeois" civil society more favorably than an "enlightened" state, or vice versa, that determines whether one leans to Anglo-Scottish-American liberalism or to the radical liberalism of the Continental political tradition.

The difference between the two liberalisms can be fairly described, in quasi-Marxist terms, as the difference between a "bourgeois" and a "post-bourgeois" ideology, exemplified in the American and French Revolutions respectively. The ideals of the American Revolution were (and are) individual liberty, social and political equality, and representative government. The ideals of the French Revolution stressed economic equality, political community, and a government—freely elected or not—that claimed to represent a sovereign popular will. It is understandable, therefore, that socialist thinkers and socialist movements of the 19th and 20th centuries all looked back to the French Revolution as the appropriate paradigm of what a "real" revolution should look like, while the American Revolution was regarded, if at all, as a marginal event. Leon Trotsky's magisterial *History of the Russian Revolution*, for instance, takes the French precedent (or the Jacobin version thereof) as authoritative in explaining the "natural" history of revolutions in general, and specifically of the Russian Revolution in which he played so notable a part. This explains why the drama Trotsky reconstructs is so coherent, so plausible, though also more fictional than real.

That European Jews should have been legatees of the political ideology of the French Revolution was inevitable under the circumstances that prevailed. They had, properly speaking, no political philosophy or political traditions of their own, after all—even today, and even in the state of Israel, there is no identifiable "Jewish" political thought. They knew nothing of Anglo-American political theory and not much more about the far-off American Revolution. The individualism of Anglo-American political theory, in any case, evoked few echoes—still evokes few echoes—in a communally-oriented Judaism. In addition, and most important, the ideology of the French Revolution, throughout the 19th century, did offer European Jewry tangible benefits of the utmost significance, while the opponents of this ideology were likely to be adherents of an established Christian church and of an established social-political order which, at the very least, discriminated against Jews, or at most totally excluded them from membership in the civil society.

It was the ideology of the French Revolution, incarnated in Napoleon, that liberated European Jewry from confinement in the ghetto. Just how much this may have meant at the time may be grasped from a reading of Martin Buber's fascinating imaginative reconstructions in his novel, *For the Sake of Heaven*, in which Orthodox Jews in a Central European ghetto conclude ecstatically that Napoleon is their long-awaited liberating messiah. This same ideology, expressed in the liberal, socialist, and social-democratic movements of the 19th century, succeeded in extending the suffrage to Jews, and in removing legal restrictions on their freedom of movement as well as their economic opportunities. In Eastern Europe, where liberalism of any kind made only a modest impression on anti-Semitic regimes, the commitment of many Jews to this ideology was correspondingly intense. While far from all European Jews situated themselves somewhere on the Left of the political spectrum, a disproportionate number did so. In France and Germany and Italy there was a stratum of conservative and centrist Jewry, assimilated into the national cultures, but many of these Jews eventually converted or simply cast off any religious or ethnic identity.

It was from Continental Europe, and mainly from Central and Eastern Europe, that Jews emigrated to the United States. They brought with them, naturally, their political beliefs. Those political beliefs still dominate the thinking of most American Jews. A recent Los Angeles *Times* poll reveals that when Jews are asked about the qualities most important to their Jewish identity—(a) a commitment to social equality, (b) religious observance, or (c) support for Israel—the first, a commitment to social equality, turns out to be the most important. This is an odd finding, since an objective observer would see in the American Jewish condition today little reason why social equality should evoke such a passionate commitment. One might think that intermarriage rather than discrimination or exclusion should be regarded as having a greater bearing on "Jewish survival." But ideas can have a life of their own, and Jewish political attitudes in the 1980's have a more direct connection with Jewish political thinking in the 1880's than with current social, economic, or even political realities in the United States.

It must also be pointed out that Jewish immigrants, congregating in the major urban centers, found there a Democratic party—usually dominated by the Irish, themselves earlier immigrants—that was hospitable to their aspirations, personal and ideological. Although the Democratic party was by no means a left-wing party, its liberalism on issues of social reform and its commitment to "balanced tickets" on which Jews were actually (if not all that frequently) elected to office were

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sufficient to engender Jewish loyalties and establish a Jewish commitment. This was even the case for Orthodox Jews who were largely apolitical and indifferent to contemporary ideologies (including Zionism).

The Republican party in those urban milieus was perceived, correctly, as dominated by Wasps (as we now call them) who were either anti-Semitic or, at the very least, inclined to discriminate socially and economically against Jews. Up to World War II, major corporations hired few Jews and the more affluent suburbs were "restricted" to non-Jews (and, it goes without saying, to non-blacks). The struggle for equality of "civil rights," led by the liberal wing of the Democratic party, only reinforced the commitment of American Jews to an agenda of liberal reform.

What is puzzling, however, is the way in which the force of this commitment has survived the enactment of the liberal agenda in the postwar years. Even while social and economic discrimination against Jews has declined with a quite unforeseen rapidity, Jews are still haunted by the specter of anti-Semitism among traditional conservative sectors of the society. And even as Jews have become one of the most affluent and upwardly mobile of ethnic-religious groups, their political ideology has remained largely unaffected.

To some degree, this can be explained by the fact that American blacks have not experienced anything like the same success, leading Jews to wonder about the security of their own achievement. To some degree, too, it has resulted from a justifiable skepticism regarding the Republican party's willingness to accept as permanent the "civil-rights revolution"—a willingness diluted or subverted by the conservative dislike of governmental action in this field. But mainly the ideological loyalty of so many American Jews has been sustained and nourished by a historic change in their religious outlook—a change that reshaped the very conception of what it means to be a "good Jew."

This change goes back to the early decades of the 19th century and gathered momentum with time. To simplify considerably, it entailed a sharp shift in emphasis from the "rabbinic" elements in the Jewish tradition to the "prophetic" elements.

One should not exaggerate the tension that traditionally prevailed between these two currents of Jewish religiosity. What today is called "normative Judaism" managed to strike a cautious and generally acceptable balance between them. After all, the high moralism of the biblical Prophets—compassion for the poor and unfortunate, the emphasis on universal peace as a specifically Jewish aspiration—was incorporated into rabbinical teachings, while the Prophets themselves insisted on the importance of observing traditional Jewish law. Prophetic moralism always or almost always stopped well short of antinomianism and messianic enthusiasm, while rabbinic legalism was always (or almost always) deferential to moral sensibilities. Jews prided themselves on being "more moral" than Christians, Muslims, or pagans, and—regardless of individual Jewish behavior—the Jewish religious tradition unquestionably put a greater stress on "good deeds" and "righteous living" than on faith or dogma.

Nevertheless, the tension was there and steps were taken to cope with it. There were undoubtedly incendiary possibilities in the declamations of the Prophets and prudence required that these be minimized. Even today, a student in the yeshiva in his early years never studies the Prophets in isolation from a study of the Pentateuch or the Talmud. And in the synagogue, the Prophets are read on the Sabbath only in the form of a commentary on the non-prophetic books of the Torah. Especially after the advent of Christianity, which can be seen as an antinomian and millenarian outburst within the Jewish prophetic tradition, it was a constant matter of concern to the rabbis that such "enthusiasm" be held in check by a more rigorous focus on lawful and orderly behavior.

After the French Revolution, however, what we today call "prophetic Judaism" acquired an ever-greater vitality and autonomy. This was part and parcel of the emerging messianic sensibility—in matters political, social, and economic—that the Revolution established throughout European society. An era of grand aspirations began. The Israeli historian, the late J.L. Talmon, opens his book, *Political Messianism: The Romantic Phase*, with the following sentences:

> The present inquiry is concerned with the expectation of universal regeneration which animated men and movements in the first half of the 19th century.
>
> No period before or after has experienced so luxurious a flowering of utopian schemes purporting to offer a coherent, complete, and final solution to the problem of social evil.

"Expectations of universal regeneration"—and in the foreseeable future, and to be achieved through political and social action! In this way, and in this period, did a secular version of Judeo-Christian messianism enter Western political thought and establish itself there as a rational option for reasonable persons. What made it seem both rational and reasonable was its apparent continuity with the theme of social, political, economic, and (perhaps above all) technological *progress* which had emerged so powerfully in the previous two centuries. Indeed, it seemed not only continuous with, but a plausible extension of, the idea of progress. Why should progress be so gradual, so intermittent even, so painfully slow? Why not, by deliberate action, hasten the progressive movement toward its predestined end—the universal regeneration of mankind?

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Now, "hastening the end" had always been regarded by Jewish and Christian orthodoxy as a dangerous, heretical temptation, one that indigenous messianism made a permanent temptation, and therefore to be guarded against all the more vigilantly. But in a secular version, rooted not in religion but in science and the newly-invented "social sciences," it escaped such vigilance. Traditional religious orthodoxy was neither confronted nor refuted by the new spirit of this new age, but was ignored and left to "wither away."

In such a heightened, "progressive" perspective, capitalism—i.e., a society centered around a market economy—posed a problem for Jews. On this matter, the relation between Jews and capitalism, there has been a vast amount of intellectual confusion.

Judaism, as is generally and correctly recognized, is much more a "this-worldly" religion than Christianity. As a result, Jews have never been opposed to or contemptuous of business (or, for that matter, of sex) as a human activity. "Making a living" was always regarded as central to Jewish family life, and while Jewish law imposed some relatively mild inhibitions and prohibitions on commercial activity, there was never any sense of a conflict between the two. Becoming wealthy was similarly regarded as a legitimate, even admirable goal—so long as this wealth was used for benign (usually communal) purposes.

But "business" in specific commercial markets is not "capitalism." Business is an activity; commerce is an activity; capitalism is an idea, an idea invented in the 18th century. Business proceeds, in one way or another, in all socioeconomic systems above the most primitive level. Capitalism is a prescription whereby business activity is incorporated into a market economy that is the major institution of civil society, an institution that is the source and guarantor of individual liberty.

It is the failure to distinguish between business activity by Jews and the capitalist idea that muddles the thinking and writing of Max Weber and Werner Sombart—and some of our own contemporaries, who are perplexed by the fact that Jews do so well under capitalism while showing so little gratitude to the system. The fact that Jews, for various historical reasons, are adept at business, and the further fact that Judaism does little to frustrate business incentives, means that Jews always manage to do very well in a capitalist society. But it does not follow that Jewish affluence or Jewish prosperity brings with it Jewish contentment—peace of mind, peace of soul. In all existing capitalist societies, Jews have done and do extremely well for themselves. And in all existing societies, Jews—especially younger Jews—are profoundly uneasy about the legitimacy of their own success. The anti-Semitic fantasy in which Jews manage to be simultaneously wealthy capitalists and subversive radicals is but a paranoid inflation of a reality.

The only exceptions to this generalization are the strictly Orthodox Jews, who isolate themselves from modernity as a whole, and who continue to practice business in a capitalist society while being utterly indifferent to, even willfully ignorant of, the capitalist idea. For them, the religious community is the only authentic sociological reality. This makes them conservative by temperament and inclination, while remaining indifferent to modern conservative ideologies, modern liberal ideologies, or modern radical ideologies.

Jews who are not strictly Orthodox, however, are fully implicated in modernity and its ideologies. For reasons already given, they are most likely to be attracted to that version of liberal ideology spawned by Continental radical-liberalism. This is most obviously the case for secularized Jews, who have been "liberated" from any formal attachment to the Jewish community, and who feel that adherence to such an ideology is an appropriate Jewish response to modernity. They find in the "secular humanism" of this ideology an adequate approximation of the ideals of the "prophetic Judaism" which emerged in the 19th century and has infused itself into all non-Orthodox versions of contemporary Judaism.

There really is such a thing as "secular humanism," just as there really is such a thing as "prophetic Judaism," and the connection between the two is deep and strong. Secular humanism, born of the Renaissance, is a form of atheism—one less interested in denying the existence of a divinity, either apart from or immanent in the cosmos, than in affirming the possibility of humanity's realizing its "full human potential" through the energetic application of high-minded (i.e., moralistic) intelligence. Prophetic Judaism, for its part, is a form of Jewish religiosity, of course, but a distinctly modern form—one less interested in God's word or Jewish law than in realizing, here on earth, a universalist version of the preaching of the Prophets.

Social and social-democratic movements are all inspired, officially or unofficially, by one version or another of secular humanism. Similarly, non-Orthodox Judaism today is, in varying degrees, inspired by, or infused by, the teaching of the Prophets rather than of the rabbis. In the case of Reform Judaism, such an inspiration was and remains its original *raison d'être*. In the case of Conservative Judaism, the prophetic teachings are allowed to dominate its secular involvements, even where there is substantial attachment to the law. And in the case of secular Jews, prophetic Judaism merges into secular humanism to create what can fairly be described as a peculiarly intense, Jewish, secular humanism.

It is this combination of secular historical experience and the religious mutation it provoked that accounts for the political predispositions of contemporary American Jews. And not only Ameri-

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can Jews. Wherever European Jews (especially East European Jews) have settled—whether it be in Canada, Australia, South Africa, or Latin America—they have located themselves on the Left-of-Center of the political spectrum. This has most obviously and strikingly been the case in Israel, where shreds and tatters of the socialist tradition—and Israel, of course, was originally settled, for the most part, by socialist pioneers—still evoke a kind of pious loyalty, despite the obvious fact that the prevalence of socialist ideas is obstructing the growth of the Israeli economy and that such ideas have no relevance whatsoever to the realities that confront Israeli foreign policy.

Having said all this, however, one must add—perhaps, even, one must conclude—that this situation cannot endure for much longer. After two centuries, the socialist idea, in whatever version, is becoming more and more meaningless, more and more incomprehensible even to its advocates. In practically all countries with self-styled socialist regimes, the movement is away from socialism, in any traditional sense of the term. As concerns economics, the direction of this movement is toward a system in which self-interested economic activity in a freer market plays a greater role. As concerns politics, it is toward a system that is, ideologically, either left-wing authoritarian or right-wing authoritarian or some unstable combination of the two. The promise of a humanistic, democratic socialism, whether as an ideal to be realized or as a goal to be approached, is dissolving into the mists.

This leaves American Jews in a condition of what social psychologists call "cognitive dissonance." Their political loyalties become more desperate in proclamation, more unbelievable in fact. This is especially the case as the so-called Third World, where socialism is still a much-respected and often official doctrine, evolves toward socioeconomic-political systems that fall outside of any Western category and have in common mainly a hostility to Western liberal civilization, Western religious humanism, and Western secular humanism. It is this hostility that shapes the attitude of those countries toward Israel, perceived (correctly) as an outpost of Western civilization. More and more, a socialist, quasi-socialist, or Left-liberal political outlook sympathetic to social democracy is becoming inconsistent with a concern, which American Jews overwhelmingly feel, for the survival of the state and nation of Israel.

How long this condition of "cognitive dissonance" will continue, and where it will end, is not now foreseeable. Everything will depend on how the Western democracies themselves adapt to this new situation. What is certain, however, is that American Jews, even as they feel more and more "at home" in America (as they do), are going to find themselves among a much larger population of liberal Americans: the ideologically uprooted and dispossessed.

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Before and After Glasnost

Yuri Orlov

GORBACHEV's reforms have created a new and critical situation in the Soviet Union. What is new is that the Soviet system has entered a transition phase that makes it more susceptible to the influence of internal and external pressures than it was earlier—or will be afterward, in all likelihood. What is critical about the current situation can be understood by asking: *what will the Soviet Union be like if its economic and strategic situation improves?* I think there are two realistic possibilities. Either the Soviet Union will become a more vital and powerful political empire, still pursuing its old strategic goal of "the victory of Communism everywhere"—with the danger that entails for world peace and security. Or it will become a vital member of the peaceful community of developed nations and, while remaining unique in many respects, will abandon its messianic political claims.

On what basis should we assess the prospects?

Consider the following phenomenon: the developed world is divided into three great capitalist economic centers: the U.S., the European Economic Community, and Japan. Gradually, other important centers are coming into being. It might seem that the competition among these centers would beget new wars; but, to the contrary, the possibility of such armed conflict arising has become more and more remote in most of the capitalist world. How can we explain such a remarkable turn of events? Why are these major powers so peaceful in their dealings *with each other*?

One reason that peace prevails among these economic centers is the extraordinary degree to which their economies are interlinked. The single world government that some people expected after World War II has still not come to pass. However, today we have in the developed capitalist nations one world, a gigantic economic commonwealth. Now every developed capitalist nation simultaneously plays the role of colony and metropolis with respect to other such nations. As the figures show, it is these nations, taken as a whole, that constitute the largest market for the community of developed capitalist nations, not their former colonies and other developing nations. Thus, war today between two developed nations would not be a war *for* markets but, instead, a war *against* their markets.

Moreover, we have seen nothing resembling the "inescapable imperialist wars" for markets and raw materials that Lenin predicted, partly because now, after decolonization, the sources of raw materials in developing nations are not owned by developed nations. Sometimes they are exploited by *transnational* corporations with the agreement of national governments. Experience shows that these corporations pursue their own interests, ones that would not be served by wars among the main capitalist centers.

Peace among the developed nations has been produced also by a shift in mass psychology. That shift away from viewing war as a serious option has been partly the result of a greatly improved standard of living since World War II, and the large number of people moving into the middle class. A great many people now stand to lose economically from the disruptions of a war.

But probably the most important source of the shift in mass psychology has been the discovery, use, and—especially—proliferation of nuclear weapons. The thought of a new world war now throws millions of people into a legitimate panic. Wiser, better-informed than ever before on the subject, they know that a new war could easily turn into a holocaust. So they have a broader, more tolerant view of differences among people and nations. They increasingly understand that *everyone* shares the responsibility for peace everywhere and they have the freedom to express that responsibility. Many actively express that responsibility by participating in the movements for

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disarmament and peace, and do so independently of their governments—indeed, not infrequently in opposition to them. (There is no such freedom for the millions of people who hold similar views in the USSR; participation in the independent peace movement still requires a readiness for self-sacrifice. But this is the result of the totalitarian mentality of the regime. I have no doubt that the Soviet leaders themselves wish to avoid a war with the nuclear nations.)

Finally, the developed nations are at peace because they are much more open to scrutiny by one another's governments and citizens than they were earlier, say before World War I. Their mutual openness has created a great deal of mutual understanding and confidence. They are not, unfortunately, completely open; but they have a degree of openness that stands in stark contrast to the guarded nature of contacts among the peoples of the socialist bloc, let alone their contacts with citizens of capitalist nations. The developed nations have a free flow of information about virtually all aspects of life, both positive and negative; no mentality of secrecy in ordinary life; and open borders, with an opportunity for citizens to travel everywhere (excluding, perhaps, a few sensitive military sites) and to meet people from other countries. Moreover, their standard of living permits millions of citizens to take advantage of that opportunity. And of course this has great economic benefits for everybody: travel and tourism are big business in the developed world.

Supporting this mutual openness is openness between the government and citizens of each nation, which has greatly increased since the beginning of the century. This, too, has promoted peace—indirectly by being one protection against a recurrence of totalitarianism, and directly by making possible, and indeed encouraging, more informed popular participation in strategic matters. It is true that there is a long way to go: citizens of the developed nations still cannnot prevent their leaders and governments from engaging in some secret military operations or local military conflicts. But even so, their situation is incomparably more advanced than the one in the USSR. And their freedom to receive and impart information is such that *after* a conflict begins, public opinion can help bring it to a halt.

We see at work here in concrete ways the important influence of economic health, civic freedoms, and human rights on peace in the developed nations. Those nations are so much a community that their citizens would reject as idiotic the very undemocratic notion of the ideological or military hegemony of any one member over all the others, and would reject as equally idiotic the very idea of a war within the community, because a war against a member nation would turn out to be a war against one's own.

If the factors I have mentioned help contribute to the peaceful coexistence of nations differing so greatly in history, culture, and style of government as the developed nations do, then perhaps analogous confidence-building factors can replace mutual deterrence in the relations between the capitalist world and the Soviet Union. How will the reforms recently initiated in the USSR influence the prospect of that occurring?

To answer this question we must consider the reforms in light of the circumstances that gave rise to them.

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The first reason for reform in the USSR has been economic stagnation. The Soviet leaders had only to open their eyes in order to see what had long been evident to many Soviet intellectuals, both dissident and non-dissident: *the Soviet system long ago lost its ability to compete economically with the West*, which has continued to survive, develop, and even thrive after World War II. The system does not work and cannot work in its current form. The great historical theory—tested directly on the lives of the people, as in Kafka's penal colony—has failed. Now one can read about it not just in the works of Soviet dissidents, but even in the Soviet press.

The failure is profoundly threatening to the Soviet leadership because it challenges the material basis of, and ideological justification for, the party's power within the USSR and its expansionist political ambitions outside it. And the *degree* of failure is threatening because it shows that the Soviet Union could irrevocably collapse into the ranks of the underdeveloped countries. From now on Soviet leaders will not be able to dismiss that idea out of hand. The possibility of such a collapse is shameful not just from a Communist or an imperial Soviet perspective. It is shameful—and this is a source of great hope—also from a *Russian national* perspective. For Russian competitiveness with the West has historical roots (dating back to Peter the Great) in a nationalist desire to be counted not simply among, but even ahead of, the nations of Europe as a cultivated, economically sophisticated country.

The degree of failure is monumental. Today, seventy years after the revolution, at the end of the Soviet experiment, we see that meat and butter are rationed in a good part of the Soviet Union (a thing unnecessary in capitalist countries during peacetime); the country as a whole is rapidly falling behind the capitalist West in labor productivity, in advanced technology, and in standard of living; and, according to Gorbachev, national income has not grown in the last twenty years if you exclude the extra income realized from the international sale of oil at inflated prices, and the artificial income generated by the sale of vodka.

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Indeed, over the last few years national income has actually fallen.

This is the catastrophic result of the "wise Leninist policy" (as the policy of the moment has been called by every Soviet leader). And for this, tens of millions of peaceful lives were destroyed during the pre-Khrushchev years—lives of entrepreneurial peasants, thoughtful workers, the more capable intellectuals, and, of course, just ordinary people.

What counts as much as the idea behind a social experiment is the manner in which it is conducted. It is probably impossible to test a social theory without some experiment affecting human lives. But it is absolutely immoral to destroy a human life because a person's qualities and ideas do not satisfy the wishes or the inevitably simplified assumptions of those conducting the experiment. (And, of course, from the scientific standpoint that the Communist party claimed as its own, it completely invalidates the experiment as a test of theory.) Yet that was exactly what the Communist party in the Soviet Union did, like the Nazi party in Germany, in the name of carrying its experiment through to the end.

The readiness to destroy human lives—the murderous manner—is the main reason for the Soviet Union's historical failure. Although it is difficult to imagine, if the Communists had recognized and given any priority to individual civic and human rights, then they would not have eliminated directly, or by means of famine, the peasants who did not want to join a *kolkhoz* (collective farm). Then, the idiotic idea of the *kolkhoz* on Russian and Ukrainian soil would have remained only an idea and not have led to such deplorable results as the chronic food shortage, which endangers the Communist party's own strategic goals.

That there is a direct link, in modern circumstances, between civic and human rights on the one hand, and the economic well-being of a country on the other, has been plain to Soviet intellectuals for some time. Over the last thirty years, a few have openly pointed out the link (thereby earning the label "dissidents") and many more have discussed it privately in their own circles. I am certain that the gradual spread of this idea, together with the surprising determination and fortitude of the dissidents, led to today's official, if partial, adoption of it. For it *has* been officially adopted. Gorbachev, in disclosing the real economic situation, has made clear that no matter who heads the Soviet regime, there is no rational route back to a centralized, murderous Stalinist structure. And *Pravda*, in its debate with *Sovietskaya Rossiya*, has said straight out that *perestroika* cannot be implemented without democratization, and that the country's former system, lacking *glasnost*, was not efficient. That is why, contrary to the view of some Soviet analysts, a reversion to Stalinism is not likely. (But Satan can perhaps be seen grinning here, for Stalin's writings also contain references to the importance of "self-criticism.")

The whole Soviet leadership, in addressing the problem of inefficiency, seems to have accepted the idea of shifting to a different model of socialism, one that is more efficient than the old model and therefore can better support the party's ideological claims and goals both within and outside the USSR. So the argument in official circles does not concern the need for change—no one has seriously disputed that for a long time—but rather what level of economic and political liberties will be sufficient to correct the existing model while leaving inviolate the most cherished tenets of the Communist leadership: (1) key posts in the hands of the Communist party; and (2) strategic planning and long-term decision-making as the prerogatives of a limited team of leaders, and kept as secret as possible from the world.

The first conclusion to be drawn from a review of Gorbachev's economic efforts to correct the model is that neither the idea of democratization nor anything else has been translated into a more or less detailed master plan. The lack of such a plan is indicated by the rather haphazard character of the first reforms, their resemblance to naive test runs. For example, despite his access to the whole seventy-year history of the Soviet system, Gorbachev somehow failed to foresee that his proposals for reforming the construction industry would turn into nothing more than another repetition of former bureaucratic reshufflings, or that the local authorities would use the law on *un*earned income to harass ordinary people with supplementary *earned* income, since they were easier prey.

The absence of a master plan is not a good recipe for saving the Soviet economy, but it does give Gorbachev flexibility. And to his credit, he uses it, learning from his mistakes and appearing ready to listen to the advice permitted under *glasnost*. Thus, the situation with respect to unearned income improved somewhat after it was criticized in the press. Backward steps then followed: for instance, the tax rates on individual incomes were set so high that they undermined the incentive for individual businesses from the very beginning. But then, after protests, a lowering of the rates was promised.

A review of Gorbachev's economic reforms shows, secondly, that there is a tendency to try to solve difficulties "from the top down." Consider the situation of the workers. Feeding the workers, and as quickly as possible, should have a high priority from a humane and democratic standpoint—for the workers' situation has been deteriorating, and workers comprise the bulk of the population. This standpoint is, as developed states well know, closely bound to a practical economic

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standpoint, because the health of an economy depends on the cooperation and energy of its workers. To get results quickly it would be natural to use the "New Economic Policy"* as a starting point in agriculture and light industry. Both sectors are painfully inefficient in comparison with the West. The industrial base for agriculture, for example, is little suited to support modern Western methods of farming. Thus, arguably, what is needed is not only the dissolution of the majority of the *kolkhozes* and many of the *sovkhozes* (state farms), but simultaneously the involvement of Western corporations and specialists in order to introduce modern farming methods without delay.

However, the workers are not starving and they are not rebelling. That is enough reason for Soviet leaders not to waste much time thinking about their needs. For it is the party custom to take a purely strategic approach to problems. The leaders are worried first of all about a potential setback to their ambitions for world leadership and do not regard improving the situation of the workers as an immediate strategic imperative. And so, before helping the workers, they are rushing into the lengthy process of restructuring the "higher" sectors of the economy, like high technology, not realizing that this approach can boomerang.

A third conclusion to be drawn about Gorbachev's economic reforms is that they are half-measures. Inside the Soviet Union, the opinion is widespread among the intelligentsia that the reforms will begin to produce results only if they are carried through to their logical conclusion. Self-financing without self-planning, different kinds of contracts without a free market, and the rest of the "innovations" in place now, are in fact more likely to disorganize the old economic order than they are to create a viable new one. The recent experimenting with the election of industrial managers reflects an illusion that in Russia it may be possible, simultaneously and without conflict, to satisfy management—whose priority is production—and the workers—whose priority is compensation.

Why such wishful thinking? Why the half-measures? It is because the Communist party apparently understands that if management receives real freedom of action, then workers will seek the right to defend themselves against actions by management that violate their interests. In other words, an independent workers' movement of the type existing in the West and even in czarist Russia might well appear on the scene to challenge the control of the party.

This points to an obvious dilemma facing the party. Carrying some of the current "democratizing" reforms to their logical conclusion would greatly increase the probability of the party getting what it wants ideologically and strategically: escape from the current economic crisis. But such reforms would entail that the party give up considerable power within the USSR, making the party and the system radically different.

THE second reason for the current Soviet reforms has been moral corruption. To apply the label of moral corruption to the Nazi and Stalinist regimes, which incited thousands of zealots to torture millions of victims, would be an obscene understatement. But it is quite appropriate to talk about moral corruption in the post-Stalin period, when Soviet society became as different from that of the Stalin era as the sky from the earth.

The facts about moral corruption in the Brezhnev era are known. More and more highly placed bureaucrats (procurators, police officials, ministers, KGB officials, party bosses, and even members of the General Secretary's own family) became involved in common crimes: bribery, theft of government property, fraud of all sorts. Why? It is illuminating to note that this did not happen earlier. Soviet officials under Stalin tortured or killed when ordered (or permitted) to torture or kill. They wrote false denunciations. They were, in short, too busy to steal on anywhere near the scale that developed under Brezhnev.

But after Stalin, Khrushchev introduced radical changes that made the Soviet system less inhumane and more concerned with legality; the exciting blood sports of earlier days were strictly forbidden. For a time, Khrushchev focused on the country's internal problems, and the bureaucracy had an opportunity to manage its affairs in an environment free of hysteria. However, Khrushchev himself slowed the effort to address those problems; Brezhnev brought it to a complete halt. This left the bureaucracy hanging in a void. What could the secretary of the Krasnodar region party committee find to do? He was permitted little leeway from above, but no one controlled him from below. Why not engage in a few swindles?

As soon as a group of war veterans tried to expose the Krasnodar party secretary's machinations, the KGB stepped in. One of the veterans was convicted of slandering the Soviet system (I was in labor camp with him), another was sent to a psychiatric hospital, and the rest were pressured into silence. When Andropov replaced Brezhnev, the party secretary was sentenced to ten years, but the veteran in my camp was freed only in Gorbachev's time.

Corruption infects all bureaucracies, and all governments have to fight this disease continually and decisively. But the corruption of the bureaucracy—especially the sort handed down by Brezhnev—is an especially serious threat to the Soviet

* Soviet economic policy from 1922-28, aimed at revitalizing the economy by allowing private property and encouraging private initiative in agriculture, industry, and trade.

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government because bureaucracy is *built into* the Soviet system, with its centralized planning, centralized, tightly classified information, and centralized leadership.

Along with bureaucratic corruption, there has been a certain degree of corruption in everyday life. Everyone has become accustomed to it. For example, white-collar and blue-collar workers, and even scientists, do not consider it a sin to take home from work in their pocket or briefcase some small item that they need—it would cost money to buy it in a store, and it probably wouldn't be available anyway. It is difficult for people to draw a strict line between private and state property when it is impossible legally to obtain bricks for a new house or a truck to transport potatoes or a replacement part for a radio or good quality writing paper. Life would come to an end in the Soviet Union if such legalities were strictly observed.

This everyday sort of corruption occurs against the background of a system of privileges and services that is itself both corrupt and corrupting. Soviet society has a money-based economy only in part. For the rest, it depends on a complex hierarchy of free privileges and services ("free" meaning paid for by society as a whole) which, in theory, are given out depending on the recipient's usefulness to society. This socialist idea would not be bad if there were some kind of adequate mechanism to define "usefulness" and some mechanism to give timely and positive feedback of the type, "such-and-such action results in such-and-such privileges and services." Such mechanisms exist in the capitalist world, for example. "Usefulness" is defined by and proportional to the consumers' desire for the product or service involved, as expressed by the price they are willing to pay. Feedback often takes place on the spot. In this fashion millions of people take part in mutually advantageous useful activity. The system is by no means entirely just—a money society is hardly the best foundation for morality. But it has turned out to be more humane and efficient than the Soviet system despite predictions to the contrary by Soviet theoreticians.

In the Soviet system, the lack of a free market excludes from the system the interaction of millions of individual preferences. Both the definition of "usefulness" and the norms of compensation are fixed by the bureaucracy and are far removed from the producer and consumer. To a significant degree, compensation by privileges and services in the Soviet Union tends to be allocated according to a person's status in the political and social hierarchy *without* regard to any work he has accomplished. That is why the Soviet system of compensation by privileges and services tends to demoralize and corrupt people, rather than stimulate production—or probity.

Consider the following: in a union resort for miners, you are less likely to meet the men who work in the mines than a flock of senior and junior officials and engineers, union personnel, and party activists. If you work in the district party office or are the son of a deputy minister, you can buy sausages made of real meat from a special store. If you are an officer guarding dissidents in a labor camp, you can buy scarce American jeans from a special store. If you work for the local executive committee, you will have to wait only five years for a family apartment, not fifteen years as an ordinary worker will.

All of this is the kind of environment in which the Soviet citizen is born, lives, and dies. If you criticize it, you can be repressed and also be slandered with impunity and called an agent of the CIA.* If you expose the wrongdoing of local bigshots, you can be sent off to the loony bin. You have to learn how to survive in this Soviet world. As people say, "It's possible to live if you just know how"—and even live not badly by Soviet standards. But Soviet citizens live badly if you judge by the standards of many other countries, and not only the United States. They live not just badly but dishonestly, and openly oppressed by an ugly caste system.

Gorbachev's merit consists partly in his ability—while being himself a product of the bureaucracy and still caught up in its treadmill—to look at this creeping universal rot through the eyes of a normal person. And that is why *glasnost* is a priority for him.

But here is another dilemma for the Soviet leaders. A *glasnost* that can genuinely keep bureaucratic corruption at a tolerable level must be based on guarantees of certain civic and human rights: the right to seek information (as in the American Freedom of Information Act) and the right to publicize it without any fear of reprisals. If people had, and energetically exercised, such rights—submitting the bureaucracy to sustained scrutiny, continually holding it accountable—it would mean de facto democratic control of the bureaucracy from below. Such control would undermine control by the party and create tension in the system by running counter to its centralized nature. Yet to use a weaker version of *glasnost* to fight against bureaucratic corruption is like applying a band-aid to a tumor.

The same holds for the fight against the problem of privileges and services. This is a structural problem, created by fundamental features of the economic system: how value is defined and control distributed. Current versions of *glasnost* cannot significantly change that system, and genuine *glasnost* would significantly challenge it. But it is

* As in the book by Nikolai Yakovlev, *CIA Target: The USSR*, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1984.

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far from clear how much this dilemma concerns Gorbachev and the other leaders. For the main losers by the system of privileges and services are the mass of ordinary people. And although the party press has begun to publish truthful portrayals of their lives, so far Boris Yeltsin (who was fired as head of the Moscow party committee) is the only leader to have shown a conspicuous interest in them and their problems as such.

But the decline among them of the prestige of the Soviet system—this does concern the other leaders, just as they are concerned with a similar decline among the scientific and technical intelligentsia, members of the Eastern bloc, and abroad. This widespread decline is strategically threatening, and has therefore become a reason for reform.

A THIRD reason for the current reforms has been the declining prestige of the Soviet model of socialism. Although much of the Soviet Union has been off-limits to its own citizens (not to mention foreigners), information reflecting unfavorably on the Soviet system has been disseminated quite widely over the last thirty years, especially in the area of human rights. The first shock was Khrushchev's "secret" speech at the 20th party congress in 1956. The second shock (especially for the West) was the appearance of *The Gulag Archipelago*, reinforced by many other independent reports on the Stalin era. Even though very few Soviet citizens got the opportunity to read *The Gulag Archipelago*, Solzhenitsyn's name became known throughout the country.

In the late 1950's, even before the appearance of his book, the first dissidents and human-rights advocates dedicated themselves to informing the Soviet and Western publics about human-rights violations in the USSR of the post-Stalin era. They were soon joined by Academician Andrei Sakharov, who greatly enhanced the authority of the human-rights movement inside the country and in the West. By the 70's, every Soviet citizen knew the famous (if officially damned) name: Sakharov. Other human-rights advocates were less well known, but practically everyone inside the USSR had heard that Sakharov had allies. Looking back, I recall how the legendary General Pyotr Grigorenko and Anatoly Marchenko (both now dead) and hundreds of others fought for human rights in the USSR with superhuman determination, always by nonviolent means, spending many years in a labor camp or psychiatric hospital for words alone—for collecting and passing on information about such things as malnutrition in the penal system or the destruction of houses of worship or the removal of unregistered believers' children from their parents' custody—and then, after serving their terms in the camps and hospitals, returning to continue their struggle.

The main source of their fortitude may well have been the sympathy they sensed from members of the intelligentsia. Many of the intellectuals, like others in the country, failed to understand the strict focus on human rights adopted by this group of dissidents and their deliberate abstention from political ideology. But they respected and some perhaps even envied the dissidents' point of view and the firmness with which they defended it. I was personally acquainted in one way or another with about 10,000 intellectuals, mostly scientific colleagues, and I can say that the dissidents were only the tip of an iceberg that now, in the Gorbachev era, is revealing itself.

THE declining prestige of the Soviet system among the scientific and technical intelligentsia has been a cause for concern among Soviet leaders not simply because it makes members of this intelligentsia tacit allies of critics in the West and elsewhere. Also, and more importantly, this is the group whose immediate help Gorbachev needs most in economically restructuring the country.

One of the many ideas for reform circulating in the Soviet Union over the last thirty years has been that, in our technological age, the modern scientific and technical intelligentsia and not the working class should manage the state (as if the working class ever really had done so). It would appear that the new Soviet leaders aim to realize this idea through *perestroika*, aim to create a union between the scientific and technical intelligentsia together with their cultural milieu on the one hand, and the party leaders on the other. This is the notion of a *party technocracy*, which is to supersede the old, purely party bureaucracy. The workers are conceived in the model as mere building blocks.

Because the country is in a desperate situation with respect to its geopolitical goals, the decision has evidently been made to go to very great lengths—while retaining the key positions in the party's hands—in order to inspire enthusiasm in the intelligentsia. For they are the only horse that can get the hopelessly mired cart moving again. This and only this explains the surprisingly free rein given now to Soviet culture and to cultural and scientific contacts between the Soviets and people in the West. And it explains why Soviet leaders, with an eye partly on Soviet prestige in the West, have released a considerable number of political prisoners from camps, psychiatric hospitals, and exile. Even the KGB has apparently realized that the more the dissidents are persecuted, the greater the effect of their message on the intelligentsia, as well as on nations abroad.

In other words, the release of prisoners is, like the enlarged cultural freedom, a tactic—and a provisional one. This is evident from the fact that labor camps for political prisoners still exist and

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the inmates include prisoners serving harsh sentences for advocating exactly what world leaders praise Gorbachev for advocating. Perhaps half the political prisoners, including some members of the Helsinki Groups, remain in detention; those who were released were not rehabilitated; *un*official human-rights groups suffer official harassment; and, not least, the whole KGB apparatus has been preserved intact and key personnel remain untouched. (Even Khrushchev made changes in personnel. But the KGB is not the bureaucracy Gorbachev has been criticizing.)

So far the tactic has been very effective in gaining the enthusiasm of the intelligentsia; maintaining it is another matter. Indeed, its provisional, limited nature leaves open the possibility that the intelligentsia will demand a higher price for their cooperation. Their demands could include freedom for all political prisoners, for example, or even dismantling of the domestic arm of the KGB, a two-party system, and radical economic reforms. Any demand along those lines would obviously pose a challenge to the party's control over the system.

Unlike the view of the Soviet system held by the intelligentsia, that of the workers and peasants has been virtually untouched by the dissidents' human-rights argument. They have had the important knowledge that there were people who were speaking out against official policies, but little comprehension of what the dissidents have been talking about. It has been possible, in general, to interest workers in political and economic ideas, but not in human-rights questions as such. Indeed, the very idea of the basic human rights of the individual is still received by them with a surprising lack of understanding, and the sending of information to the West about human-rights violations in the USSR is still on the whole condemned.

Nevertheless, my impression is that even decades ago, many found the image of socialism far from shining, many knew there was plenty to protest against: unjust privileges; the excessive influence of the bureaucracy; the lack of attention to housing, food, and other vital necessities; and the inefficient management of the economy. And certainly now, despite the enormous Soviet propaganda machine, the image of Soviet socialism in the popular consciousness has become greatly tarnished, even for the generation which has had no direct experience of the mass repressions of earlier years. It is no longer possible to persuade such people through appeals to their socialist spirit to do something that involves personal sacrifice. Now it is necessary to buy them instead of trading on their enthusiasm, to pay a pretty price, and to settle for whatever they produce. In capitalist countries, this is far from uncommon and indeed is often an operating assumption. But for the Communist party, which has become a victim of its own inspirational propaganda, this is a startling new situation. If the economy cannot effectively accommodate it, things are bound to get worse. So this is yet another reason for *perestroika*.

As we have seen, however, the Soviet leaders do not regard ordinary people's dissatisfaction with the system as a strategic problem. Not surprisingly, then, the leaders have formulated for the workers singularly unimaginative and ineffective reforms. The workers remain dissatisfied, unmoved, and by all accounts unmoving. Moreover, having received no benefits from Gorbachev's program, they are skeptical about it.

THE decline in prestige of Soviet socialism within the USSR has taken place *more slowly than—though it has been fed by—the* serious decline in Eastern Europe. Occurring on the Soviet Union's very doorstep, as it were, this decline in Eastern Europe is a direct and deeply embarrassing challenge to the Soviet leaders' global ambitions.

In 1956 the Hungarians revolted. Soviet Communists tried to convince themselves that the uprising was the revolt of a country which had recently been an enemy of the Soviet Union and which therefore still had a negative attitude toward it. But it was more difficult to explain the 1968 Prague Spring in that way: after all, the Czechs had greeted Soviet soldiers with great enthusiasm in 1945. The Czech intervention, directed against yet another nation rejecting the Soviet model of socialism, not only split the European Communist movement, but also gave rise to differing opinions (secretly expressed or secretly held, as Soviet custom demands) among Soviet Communists.

As for Poland, the appearance of Solidarity (an independent union of *workers*) and the participation once again, as in Czechoslovakia, of many *Communists* supporting the idea of change—this pained and frightened the naive among Soviet Communists (there are not many of them left) and puzzled the cynical majority.

Here was the first really serious sounding of the alarm: the empire is beginning to crack. "We won't give back Poland!" Chekists in charge of my labor camp assured me. "To whom?" I asked, "the Poles?" "You're mixed up in all this too," they complained. (It turned out that I and my fellow dissidents were, without knowing it. Later, when I got to the West, Polish émigrés told me that the very existence of Soviet dissidents, acting in rather more difficult conditions than the Poles, provided moral support for the Polish intellectuals supporting change in Poland.) The alarm was very serious indeed, because Poland is a highly explosive nation of forty million people for whom rebellion against Russian despotism is almost a national tradition.

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Brezhnev found an effective administrative solution for the Polish problem—the imposition of martial law. But no political solution was found, and it was clear that one wouldn't be found. Poland could be permitted to continue in its current direction, or it could be suppressed—a thing that would taint the whole image of the USSR as the invasions of Hungary and Czechoslovakia had. Either way, the global ambitions of the Soviet leaders would be undermined.

Gorbachev was, I believe, well aware of this difficulty when pondering *glasnost* and *perestroika*. I can certainly imagine him thinking that if the Communist party were to take the initiative and introduce a degree of liberalization that would give the Soviet Union a more European appearance, then (among other benefits) the Soviet Union might cease to be a bogeyman for the Eastern European peoples; this European appearance, together with a discreet use of force, might reconcile Eastern Europe to Soviet control.

The sources of declining Soviet prestige within the USSR and Eastern Europe have, in the West, fed a decline of Soviet prestige among Soviet sympathizers, made critics of many people who before were indifferent or neutral or tolerant, and deepened the enmity of old opponents. When one is competing with the West, as the Soviet Union is, a decline of prestige there is a setback. When, at the same time, one desperately needs Western technology and expertise to help avoid economic and strategic catastrophe, such a decline can be disastrous.

The process of declining Soviet prestige took longer to register in the West than in the USSR itself. And it might have stabilized after the invasion of Czechoslovakia (or indeed not occurred at all, despite Poland and Afghanistan) without the continual SOS signals sent out from inside the USSR by human-rights advocates, and without the publicity that their Western supporters gave to the martyrdom many suffered for their beliefs.

For long years, human-rights advocates had to beat against a wall of silence and even indifference in the West. But the cumulative effect of their efforts finally made a difference. President Carter became the first U.S. President to raise the issue of human rights to the level of international politics and diplomacy. At the 1986 Vienna Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, practically all the Western delegations energetically criticized the USSR, citing it by name. (By contrast, a decade earlier at the Belgrade Conference there was very little criticism of Soviet human-rights violations, and even the Western delegations did not consider this question very important.) Today, not only public but also parliamentary commissions on human rights exist in most Western countries, which deal with problems in the Soviet Union as well as in Africa and Latin America. And President Reagan made human rights in the Soviet Union a centerpiece of his agenda during his summit trip to Moscow in May-June 1988.

The Soviet Union has faced the fact that human-rights violations have not been helping its image in the West and has taken steps to adjust that image. Soviet leaders released many (but far from all) political prisoners after the Vienna Conference opened in 1986, formally acknowledging at the time that doing so would help improve relations with the West. They have permitted an increased number of Soviet Jews to emigrate. They have, also, formally acknowledged that human-rights violations are not exclusively the internal affair of the country involved. And they have even felt moved to create their own—"official"—commission on human rights, which has held discussions with human-rights groups from the West.

Such developments within the USSR are indeed constructive. Unfortunately, they are not a sign of a dramatic change of values, but are an extension to the West of the provisional change of tactics directed at the Soviet intelligentsia. The harsh reality of what lies behind the scenes of the Soviet human-rights show leaves open a possibility discussed earlier in relation to the Soviet intelligentsia: in exchange for its urgently needed cooperation, the West could extract from the Soviet leaders a price that is very high, one that posed a serious challenge to their control. The West could, for example, make demands ranging from the release of all political prisoners to freedom for all Soviet citizens to travel outside and even emigrate from the Soviet Union.

Finally, Gorbachev's decisions to withdraw from Afghanistan and to pursue disarmament, while not exactly reforms, are important changes that must be included in our discussion. For they reflect pressures for reform (the cost of Afghanistan to Soviet prestige within and outside the USSR; the cost of the nuclear arms race to the Soviet economy), and they obviously have a direct bearing on the subject of a peaceful Soviet Union.

For the Soviets, the war in Afghanistan—that eight-year adventure in genocide, complete physical destruction of a country, and forced exile of a third of its population—has resulted not only in a loss of Soviet prestige around the world (including the Muslim world). It has also resulted in the deaths of many Soviet soldiers, growing discontent on the home front, and the moral degradation of the surviving Soviet soldiers, who, sent to repel alleged American aggression, instead found themselves killing women and children. Gorbachev, who was free from personal responsibility for the war, could hardly *not* have decided to withdraw from Afghanistan.

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It would therefore be premature to infer from the withdrawal that the USSR has become less aggressive in nature. I say "less" because the USSR has not been especially peaceloving: consider the partition of Poland in 1939; the occupation of the Baltic states in 1940; the war against Finland in 1940; the annexation of Tuva on the Mongolian border in 1944; the suppression of the Hungarian revolution in 1956; the occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1968; and then the occupation of Afghanistan in 1979.

But at least Soviet leaders after Stalin have never displayed any desire to begin a nuclear war. Even before Gorbachev, they had advanced the idea in principle of destroying the whole nuclear arsenal. Soviet strategy does not rest on the concept of "a final, decisive war," but on the concept of nibbling away piece by piece, making use of localized conflicts. Thus, Gorbachev's general approach to nuclear disarmament is not so new. What is different is the logical conclusion he has drawn from it: if no one is planning a nuclear war and the upkeep of a nuclear-missile arsenal is a crushing burden for the economy, why not eliminate nuclear weapons?

The introduction of *glasnost* made the solution easier. The idea of greater openness permitted taking such psychologically difficult steps as having foreign observers at maneuvers and on-the-spot inspections. However, disarmament, despite its great importance, is not sufficient to assure a stable peace: a war between the two blocs can still break out, even if it is fought only with knives. (Or tanks, which the Soviets are still energetically producing even as they are conducting negotiations for the reduction of nuclear weapons.)

III

Let me now return to the questions with which I began. If we consider the factors that help make for the peaceful community of developed nations, we can say—speaking very generally at the moment—that the current interests of the Soviet leadership create some grounds for hope that the USSR will become a member of that community.

Soviet leaders do not simply want to avoid economic catastrophe; they plainly want their country to achieve a level of economic well-being comparable to that of the developed capitalist nations. Such well-being, in modern times, entails close and constructive ties with other developed nations; also, it implies a standard of living that gives many citizens an economic stake in peace and the money to learn about and form ties with citizens of other nations through travel.

Moreover, Soviet leaders have identified some level of civic and human rights as necessary means for achieving that economic well-being.

However, the prospect of economic success is being limited by the Soviet leaders' habitual orientation to strategy, which is being expressed by their "top down" approach to defining problems and setting priorities for economic reform.

A more fundamental problem is the dilemma I touched on earlier: to reform effectively what the Soviet leaders have made targets of reform, by using the means they themselves have identified as necessary, will entail—in some cases certainly and in others possibly—profound challenges to the party's sphere and degree of control, its strategic goals, and, indeed, to the fundamental nature of the Soviet system.

Let me briefly summarize the sources of that dilemma. First, even to begin to be effective, the current innovation of self-financing and contracts must be coupled with self-planning and some kind of free market. But doing so would already be a serious challenge to the party and the system, apart from the fact that real self-planning for managers would be bound to create immense pressures for an independent workers' union.

Consider, too, the targets of bureaucracy and the system of compensation by privileges and services. A *glasnost* that would effect real reforms here would have to be, as I suggested above, one grounded in absolute guarantees of freedom to seek and impart information without any reprisals. And an effective *glasnost* would certainly entail a de facto democratic control that would undermine the basic structure of the economic system and party control over it.

At the heart of the dilemma, then, is the issue of human rights. It is a stumbling block inherent in the situation, not one imported into it by Soviet human-rights activists or by their supporters abroad.

The issue of human rights is critical to the prospects of a more peaceful Soviet Union. For the dilemma that faces Soviet leaders is acting as a brake on reform in the region of economics as well as of civic and human rights. There are, it is true, people within the party leadership who are willing to go rather far by traditional Soviet standards. But most of the leaders have not achieved power in order to lose it or to see it radically transformed. The changes they are making are a calculated effort to *strengthen their own position*, to strengthen their ability to carry out the party's self-appointed global task. Thus, even for the so-called liberal members of the Soviet leadership, the dilemma is a grave one.

It is recognition of its gravity that accounts, I believe, for the lack of a master plan, the tentativeness, the half-measures, the selectivity in defining and implementing ideas like *glasnost*. These are, too, symptomatic of the leaders' perception of the economic problem as a *technical* one to be resolved by trial and error. Through experimenting

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with the judicious application of fertilizers abstracted from democracy, they will learn (they think) what each degree of economic growth costs the party and how to get the most success with the least loss of party control along the way. And they think they will learn, *before the fact*, the answer to the delicate, technical, all-important question of the critical point at which their means of reform will irrevocably erode their end: power. In other words, the Soviet leaders are willing to settle for something less than what the developed world would regard as a fully developed economy.

The optimism with which Gorbachev and his supporters are pursuing *perestroika* suggests a belief that they can achieve an economic success sufficient for their strategic purposes *before* reaching the critical point. If they are right, then the answer to our initial question is that the Soviet Union will indeed become a more vital, powerful, isolated empire, and so will continue to pose a danger to world peace and security.

ARE they right? If they maintain their current approach, I am certain that they will not prove to be. Their economic situation is so bad that it is beyond discussion in terms of *degrees* of improvement. Any non-trivial improvement at this stage requires a comprehensive and radical change of the whole system, not experimental tinkering with parts of it and with granting selected civic and other rights, all infused with exhortations from above.

Even if they change their approach, there is still an important psychological question. What they call "democratization" is a collection of features of democracy abstracted from their context and regarded as techniques for achieving certain results. But these things are not techniques. They are historic and fundamental human rights of liberty, equality, and fraternity translated into practical, interrelated principles. Those principles speak to and can create powerful human desires. So it is possible that the Soviet leaders greatly overestimate how isolable and controllable their democratizing "techniques" are; greatly underestimate how a taste of one can quickly develop into a powerful desire for more of the same and quickly ramify into equally powerful desires for others; and greatly underestimate how these desires can be expressed in powerful social pressure for increased civic and human rights.

I simply do not know whether the Soviet leaders will ever dare to take a different approach to economic reform. They could conceivably do so without facing such social pressure, and therefore could achieve their strategic economic goal. It is also conceivable that they can continue to tinker without facing that pressure. The result in either case would not advance world peace and security.

But if their reading of social psychology is wrong—if their experiments in "democratization" produce escalating, powerful, internal pressure for increased civic and human rights—then it seems to me one of two things will happen, the first bad and the second potentially good for world peace and security.

The pressure will occur when (if the leaders have stopped tinkering and are lucky) the current economic situation has at least been stabilized. Faced with that pressure, the leaders will cut short their whole program of reform; they will, in effect, engage in a salvage operation to keep intact the party's control and global ambitions.

Or, the pressure will occur *before* the economy has been stabilized, forcing the leadership to choose between economic catastrophe and a transformation of the system into something democratic. I find it hard to believe that, faced with such alternatives, sane leaders would choose catastrophe. For selfish if not patriotic reasons, leaders would want to keep their position as leaders and would want to have something to lead. The prospect of leading a developed world power, one different from the old one but still unique, would surely be better than nothing.

ON THIS analysis, the future of Russia and its contribution to world peace and security now depend on the intelligence and courage of its intelligentsia, and on the forcefulness and timing of their demands for civic rights and for human rights. (In the USSR, the struggles for each have become indivisible.) Unfortunately, it is very possible that the intelligentsia could settle for increased civic and human rights *only* in the sphere of culture as the price of their cooperation. Such a settlement would indeed be a gain from the standpoint of improving conditions within the Soviet Union, but not from the standpoint of world peace and security.

From that standpoint, it is critical that the Soviet leaders' reading of social psychology *be made incorrect*. It is critical that the Soviet intelligentsia as well as the leaders of the Western nations pressure the Soviet leadership for increased civic and human rights in all spheres: political, social, and cultural; individual and collective. *And it is critical that the pressure be exerted now*, during this period of transition when the Soviet leadership is so vulnerable to it.

At the same time, the intelligentsia needs to be urged to develop for Soviet leaders realistic models of how the system can be transformed and how the economy can be raised to world standards within a relatively short time (something like fifteen to twenty years), while keeping some of the ideas it has long lived by. I myself think that any new political models must at a minimum contain provisions for independent trade unions and at least two political parties. And in thinking of

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economic models, I find myself returning to the idea I developed years ago in the article "Is a Non-Totalitarian Socialism Possible?"*

In that article I called for a shift to "private initiative without private property," a capitalist *model with some government regulation but without* private ownership of any substantial means of production. Formal ownership of the means of production would reside in the state, but effective ownership would be exercised by leaseholders. This might be called a model of "a democratic society of free leaseholders." The current economic reforms based on the idea of *rent* as the main type of economic relation are in fact already compatible with this model.

I did not see when I wrote the article in 1975, and do not now see, any other road leading to an evolution away from a Soviet socialist structure toward a democratic one on a *non*-capitalist basis. And I certainly did not foresee in 1975 that there would come so soon as now such an important, probably unique, opportunity for the Soviet leadership to be pressed into making the USSR a more humane country and a real member of the community of developed nations, competing with them through ideas, culture, goods, services—but no longer through physical force and weapons.

* This essay, written in March 1975, was circulated in *samizdat*—ED.

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Is Jordan Palestine?

Daniel Pipes and Adam Garfinkle

KING HUSSEIN'S recent declaration that "there should be the separation of the West Bank from the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan" presents all parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict with opportunities and dangers. The Palestine Liberation Organization must make the most of its opportunity or fall by the way. Syrians and other Arabs must revamp their strategies. So, too, Israelis and Americans seeking an end to the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip must engage in some major rethinking; they cannot keep pretending that nothing has changed.

And what about those who want Israel to remain in the territories? Their opportunity is clear, for with Jordan temporarily out of the picture, they can convincingly argue that there is no Arab interlocutor with whom to discuss peace, and therefore no realistic alternative to a Greater Israel. Indeed, they can claim that Hussein's exit proves what they have been saying all along: that the West Bank is not part of Jordan, but part of Israel.

It has become very important to pay close attention to such views. The Likud bloc has either led or been a part of the Israeli government since 1977, and the evidence suggests that its position will grow even stronger over the next eleven years. The demographic threat and the Arab uprising have shifted Israeli opinion to the Right; more than ever, the "transference" of the Arab population from the territories has become intellectually respectable.

At the same time, however, Likud sympathizers have suffered a minor irritation, in that King Hussein has now also rejected the "Jordan is Palestine" slogan which underlies so much of their policy. The King put it as plainly as he could on the evening of July 31: "Jordan is not Palestine."

Those four words carry the baggage of a long and complex history that continues to weigh on events—so much so that the future balance among Israelis, Jordanians, and Palestinians depends in good part on which of the two conflicting views of the Jordan-is-Palestine theory will prevail.

ALTHOUGH closely associated with Ariel Sharon, the *enfant terrible* of Israeli politics, the snappy argument that Jordan is Palestine has long underlain the policy of the Likud bloc as a whole. In the 1920's, its founding father Vladimir Jabotinsky asserted that Palestine is a territory whose "chief geographical feature" is that "the Jordan River does not delineate its frontiers but flows through its center." Then, as recently as 1982, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir wrote that, "reduced to its true proportions, the problem is clearly not the lack of a homeland for the Palestinian Arabs. That homeland is Trans-Jordan or Eastern Palestine. . . . A second Palestinian state to the west of the river is a prescription for anarchy." Nor is this just the view of politicians; Mordechai Nisan, a scholar, explains that "nobody ever considered the two sides of the Jordan River anything but integral parts of a single land called Palestine."

A number of American supporters of Israel accept the Jordan-is-Palestine argument. Joan Peters premises her study, *From Time Immemorial*, on this notion. She routinely calls Israel a "corner of Palestine" and "Western Palestine," while "Eastern Palestine" is her term for Jordan. George F. Will states that "Jordan is Palestine—historically, geographically, ethnically." Two small but active organizations, the Jordan *Is* Palestine Committee of Hyde Park, New York, and the Washington-based CAMERA (Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America) also make this argument with advertisements prominently placed in the national U.S. media.

Spelled out in more detail, the Jordan-is-Palestine slogan holds that Palestine includes the territory on the far side of the Jordan River and therefore that Jordan is the Palestinian state—even if it has a Hashemite rather than a Palestinian ruler. Instead of two peoples fighting for one land, the Jews and the Palestinian Arabs are portrayed as controlling different territories—Jews in the western portion of Palestine, now called Israel, and Arabs in the eastern part of Palestine, now called Jordan.

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This nomenclature serves a number of purposes. It undercuts any Arab claim to sovereignty over territory Israel now holds. It makes the Palestinians look greedy: they already have a whole loaf and they want another. It implies that while Palestinians should leave Israel alone, they should feel free to make changes in the Hashemite Kingdom. It suggests that, because Israel has at least as valid a claim to the East Bank as the Palestinians do to the West, the granting of the eastern part of Palestine to Arabs represents a form of Zionist generosity. Finally, it implies that the Israelis may be justified in expelling Arabs to Jordan, their true Palestinian patrimony.

In all these ways, the kindred notions of Jordan-is-Palestine and Greater Israel join the demographic and political issues facing Israel today to create the political agenda of a significant sector of the Israeli Right.

The Jordan-is-Palestine argument rests on four main premises: that Palestine historically included Jordan; that the British-governed Mandate of Palestine included the entire territory of today's Israel and Jordan; that the two regions are geographically and culturally indistinguishable; and that Palestinian and Jordanian leaders themselves believe Jordan and Palestine to be identical.

The trouble is, neither the historical record nor the map unambiguously supports any of these propositions. Rather, they are based on a selective interpretation of history and geography, a narrow and eccentric reading of the British Mandate, and a distortion of inter-Arab political dynamics.

Specious arguments tend to have mischievous effects, and the Jordan-is-Palestine tactic is no exception. In the end, it is likely to advance the cause of a Palestinian state not merely on the East Bank but on the West Bank as well, and to redound dangerously against Israeli interests.

FIRST, Jordan-is-Palestine advocates argue that the East Bank has always been considered part of Palestine. But a close look at the territory that is today Jordan shows that sometimes it was seen as part of Palestine, at other times not. Further, "Palestine" was for centuries a concept, not a fixed cartographic entity, so its political meaning was even more ambiguous than its borders.

Jewish history contains many boundaries for *Eretz Yisrael*, the land of Israel. The first boundaries—promised, but not realized—were those of the Patriarchs, and they established the Jordan River as a frontier. Later books of the Bible (Deuteronomy, Joshua) describe a border extending to the eastern side, and Saul's kingdom of the 11th century B.C.E. included the non-desert parts of today's Jordan. So did King David's domains. In contrast, territory under Jewish control in the 12th century B.C.E. ended at the river, as it did during much of the Second Commonwealth.

Whatever the situation on the ground, Jewish tradition clearly distinguishes between areas of historical Jewish habitation and the land of the Covenant as defined in the Bible. Only the latter, more circumscribed, area is "the land of milk and honey," the subject of God's promise to Israel. The Torah (Numbers 34:1-12) makes it clear in its most exact specification of the boundaries of the land of the Covenant that the Jordan River is the eastern limit of *Eretz Yisrael*: "And the border shall go down and strike against the slope of the Sea of Kinneret eastward; and the border shall go down to the Jordan, and the goings out thereof shall be at the Salt Sea." This explains why Moses's death on Mount Nevo, in today's Jordan, was viewed as a punishment. It is also revealing that God imposed conditions on the two tribes (Reuben and Gad) that inherited land on the eastern side of the river. Each of these points implies a lesser status for the eastern side of the Jordan.

Outside the Jewish tradition, there is a broader political history to consider. Palestine was administered in a myriad of divisions under the Babylonians, Persians, Ptolemies, Seleucids, and Romans, sometimes combining the east and west sides of the Jordan River, sometimes not. To take Roman times as an example, the Jordan River initially formed a boundary; after 66 C.E. it did not. Conversely, the first Jewish revolt extended beyond the Jordan, the second ended at the river.

The Romans introduced the word Palestine as a way to expunge the name Judea from the map—a punishment for the Bar Kochba rebellion suppressed in 135 C.E. Naming the region after the Philistine residents of the coast, they called it Palaestina. But a new name did not slow down the constant redistricting. In 284 the southern part of the Roman province of Arabia was added to Palaestina; in 358, territory east and south of the Dead Sea was separated and called *Palaestina Salutaris*. Shortly thereafter, *Palaestina Primera* (capital: Caesarea) and *Palaestina Secunda* (capital: Scythopolis, the modern Beit Shean) came into being. *Palaestina Salutaris* was renamed *Palaestina Tertia* (capital: Petra). The Jordan River did not divide these regions.

When the Arabs conquered the area in 634, they inherited and kept the Roman divisions for over three centuries, so their provinces too straddled the river. During the Crusades, the Jordan River did for the most part divide Palestine from Muslim territory. In Mamluk times (1250-1516), the land's administrative boundaries changed again, with the river serving as a boundary in the north, but not in the south. The Ottomans (1516-1918) initially left the Mamluk divisions in place, but then made a series of changes that increased the role of the river as a boundary.

Not only did the border move back and forth during Roman and Muslim rule, but Palestine

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never constituted a single political unit between the fall of the Second Jewish Commonwealth in 64 C.E. and the Balfour Declaration in 1917—with the exception of the Crusades. Therefore, it is nonsense to speak of "historic" Palestine as if it were a single longstanding polity. Palestine lived in the hearts of those who loved it, and that was in a realm without clearly defined boundaries. In medieval Europe, for example, "Palestine" referred to the territory occupied by the Hebrews before the Diaspora, but since this area had changed size many times, the definition implied no precise boundaries on a map.

In modern times, too, pious Christians and Jews continued to see Palestine in the light of biblical text and history, and paid little attention to actual divisions on the ground. They drew their maps to show Palestine as it had been assigned to the Tribes of Israel. The library is full of travelogues with titles like *Heth and Moab* or *The Land of Gilead*. Naturally, Palestine for them meant both sides of the Jordan, but especially the Promised Land.

Not surprisingly, early Zionists and their Christian supporters assumed that parts of the east bank would be incorporated into Jewish Palestine. This helps explain why Jewish soldiers fought on the east bank to wrest it from the Ottoman Turks. And why, in 1919, the Zionists proposed to the Versailles Peace Conference that their future state's frontier extend deep into the east bank. And the resolution of the thirteenth Zionist Congress, in August 1923: "Recognizing that eastern and western Palestine are in reality and de facto one unit historically, geographically, and economically, the Congress expresses its expectation that the future of Transjordan shall be determined in accordance with the legitimate demands of the Jewish people." And why the Jewish National Fund owned land on the east bank until the late 1940's.

Notwithstanding these claims, the historical record shows that Palestine did not always include the east bank, and the Jordan River has often served as a military and political division.

THE second premise of the Jordan-is-Palestine argument refers to the fact that for a short time in 1920-21, the British government placed Jordan's territory under the titular jurisdiction of the Palestine Mandate.

Along with the rest of the Middle East, the modern political history of Palestine and Jordan began with World War I. At the center of this transformation was the British attempt to build alliances for the war effort against Germany. London gave vaguely defined promises of Ottoman territory in the Levant to three different parties. In the Hussein-McMahon correspondence, ten letters exchanged between July 1915 and March 1916, the British promised portions of geographic Syria to the Ottoman governor of Mecca, the Sharif al-Hussein ibn Ali, but exact boundaries were not specified. The secret Sykes-Picot agreement of May 1916 divided the same area (and more) between Britain and France. The Balfour Declaration of November 1917 endorsed "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people."

Britain's three alliances served its wartime purposes fairly well; in a two-year campaign that ended in October 1918, British forces took control of the area stretching from the Mediterranean Sea to Iran. But after the war, the apparent mutual exclusivity of these agreements caused considerable trouble. In an initial effort to balance commitments to Arabs, Frenchmen, and Zionists, the British divided the Levant into three military administrations in October 1918. London administered a zone roughly equivalent to what later became Israel and opened Jewish immigration to it. The French assumed control of the coastal region between Israel and Turkey. The Sharif's son, Prince Faisal, received what became known as Transjordan, as well as everything away from the Mediterranean in today's Lebanon and Syria. Damascus served as his capital.

In accord with the Sykes-Picot agreement, however, the French government aspired to control Damascus and the interior, so it expelled Faisal from his capital in July 1920. But the French did not claim the southern part of Faisal's territory, which now fell under British jurisdiction.

Here we arrive at a critical point for Jordan-is-Palestiners: the British now for the first time called their whole territory in the Levant the "Mandate for Palestine." In other words, starting in July 1920, Jordan formed part of Palestine, at least as far as the British were concerned.

But it did not remain so for long. In March 1921, Winston Churchill, the colonial secretary, found it "necessary immediately to occupy militarily Trans-Jordania." Rather than use British troops to do this, he decided to control it indirectly. Toward this end, Churchill divided the Palestine Mandate into two parts along the Jordan River, creating the Emirate of Transjordan on the east bank and excluding Jewish immigration there. Churchill offered this territory to Faisal's older brother Abdallah, who after some hesitation accepted. The Hashemite dynasty of Abdallah, his son Tallal, and his grandson Hussein has ruled Transjordan (or Jordan, as it was renamed in 1949) ever since. After March 1921, the east bank was no longer Palestine.*

* Nit-pickers can find legal grounds to argue that the British continued to treat Transjordan as part of Palestine for some years to come. In a White Paper of June 1922, Palestine refers to both parts of the British Mandate. Reports on Transjordan to the League of Nations were filed in the Palestine drawer. A visa for Palestine was valid for Transjordan too. But none of this obscures the division of the two banks.

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The sum of this complex tale is that Jordan was part of the Palestine Mandate for a mere eight months, from July 1920 to March 1921. Even that is vitiated by two facts: the League of Nations formally bestowed the mandatory responsibility on Great Britain only in July 1922, making this eight-month period legally irrelevant; and the British disposed of almost no authority in Transjordan during those months when they theoretically held it as part of Palestine. In fact, the east bank lacked any ruler: Paris stayed away, London did not seek direct control, and the Hashemites had other priorities. "At that moment," reported Herbert Samuel, the British High Commissioner of Palestine, "Trans-Jordan was left politically derelict."

A few months of rule that was neither de facto nor de jure is hardly reason, seventy years later, to call Jordan a part of Palestine. Besides, it is preposterous to base today's major decisions of war and peace on the transient interests of the British empire after World War I. That Jordan was briefly part of the Palestine Mandate does not establish a vital link; it merely recalls a historical curiosity. As L. Dean Brown observes, "Jordan is Palestine only in the sense that Nebraska, which was part of the Louisiana Purchase, is still Louisiana."

THE third premise holds that Jordan and Palestine constitute just one region because the division between them is geographically meaningless and Arab residents of the two banks share much in common. After all, what is the Jordan River but an overblown stream? To many observers, the idea that it ever formed a border seems silly. But the Jordan River historically divided the two banks much as would a major river; as Henry Van Dyke wrote in 1908, the Jordan "is a flowing, everlasting symbol of division, of separation." Further, the river is a part of a much larger geographic feature—the Rift Valley—which thoroughly impedes intercourse between the two sides. Accordingly, west and east banks have long been separate; Jordanians are not Palestinians, nor the reverse.

Diminutive as the Jordan River appears today, it was not always so. The flow of water has been much reduced due to heavy use in recent decades; seasonal rains used to make the river at times nearly impassable due to the velocity of the current. This is not surprising given that, with the one exception of the Sacramento River in California, the Jordan has the most precipitous drop of any river on earth.

Lieutenant W.F. Lynch, the commander of the U.S. Navy's 1848 expedition to the Jordan River, wrote an account of his trip. His detailed log includes such phrases as "foaming river," "foaming rapid," "tumultuous waters," "a desperate-looking cascade," "whirlpool," "a cauldron of foam," "fierce rapids," "sweeping current," and "mad torrent." As if that were not enough, he describes its "breathless velocity," "ugly sheer," "very steep and tumultuous rapid," "ugly rapid," "fearful cataract," and "brawling rapid." One of Lynch's ships sank due to repeated strikes against rocks; others were constantly in danger.

It was not just the river's ferocity that made it difficult to pass; it lacked every feature that makes most rivers integrative. It meandered wildly, so that passage was painfully slow and navigation unrewarding, even over short distances. Its banks eroded rapidly, rendering impractical either buildings or bridges along the shores. This meant, Frank G. Carpenter observed in 1923, that the Jordan "has no wharves, no boats, and no cities or villages of any account. It has numerous fords but no bridges of any size."

The valley containing the river, especially its eastern side, was a wild, difficult place where plant, animal, and human life all impeded travel. John Franklin Swift painted a vivid scene from his 1867 trip:

> The borders of the river below the banks are filled to the water's edge with a dense thicket of cane, mixed with oleanders and willows, so that at no place . . . can it be approached except by pushing through this almost impassable undergrowth. And here wild boars are said to abound in dangerous numbers.

Other animals included hyenas, jackals, lynx, and porcupine. Further from the river banks, the territory was either badlands or what Lynch called "a perfect desert, traversed by warlike tribes."

To make matters worse, the Jordan is but one element of a much larger obstacle, the Rift Valley, a unique geographic phenomenon stretching from Turkey to Mozambique. In Palestine it includes, quite beyond the river and its thickets, the very lowest spot on the face of the earth; extremely hot and dry temperatures; steep, forbidding inclines, and few passes—all of which makes for a major natural boundary between west and east banks. According to the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, "the Rift Valley was throughout history one of the main factors for the division of the region into two parts, very infrequently—and then only partially—united into a single state."

Border or not, the valley has always presented a formidable military boundary, and possession of the few places where the river could be forded on foot was a source of strategic strength. The small population on the eastern side also resticted exchanges between the two banks of the river. The east bank was never developed agriculturally as was the land on the west bank, in part bacause of inferior soil and lesser rainfall above the valley, in part because the valley was mostly a malarial swamp.

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The river quite precisely delineated desert from sown, agricultural lands from pasturage. Already in biblical times, the east bank was a hinterland where the pursued could flee and disappear, as David did after Absalom's revolt. A paucity of contacts between the two banks caused abiding differences in identity. Two American travelers at the beginning of this century, William Libbey and Franklin E. Hoskins, went so far as to observe that the river made residents of the east and west banks "strangers, or enemies, to each other."

Over the next 150 years, the two banks increasingly developed along separate lines, with the western region benefiting from centralized rule, a much more advanced economy, and a cosmopolitan urban culture. The river and rift thus became a psychological divide, cutting insignificant Transjordan from world-important Palestine.

At the time of its delineation in 1921, Transjordan lacked water, wealth, and people. It had but one remote and underdeveloped port, a thin strip of fertile land, and a population of under 250,000, nearly half of whom were nomadic. No wonder that Ladislas Farago could write in 1936:

> Now on the Palestinian [western] side of the Allenby bridge everything seemed to be orderly, but hardly had we gone three hundred yards on the other side of the bridge when modern Palestine suddenly ceased and—bump, bump—we were driving on a primitive road of nature.

More important, Transjordan contained no great cities or historic seats of power. In 1924, Mrs. Stewart Erskine still deemed Abdallah's capital city, Amman, a "straggling village," and by all accounts it was a dirty and squalid town.

The lack of cities meant no high civilization. Transjordan lacked mosques of significance and important Islamic associations; printing presses, libraries, and institutions of higher learning were absent, as were medical facilities. The country did not have its own postage stamps until 1927—but that hardly mattered because there were no postal services to speak of. There was no trade or industry. As James Morris wrote:

> [Transjordan] produced nothing very much, made nothing at all, was economically unviable and geographically nonsensical. Its principal town was the one-horse Amman. Its most famous places (Jerash, Petra, Kerak) were all in ruins. Its forests had disappeared into the stores of the Hejaz Railway, for fuel or railway ties. It had hardly any roads, only one railway line, virtually no schools, no police, and no very logical *raison d'être*.

It boasted, rather, barren mountains in abundance and an unending desert.

Admittedly, the western side of the Jordan was hardly an international center of industry or military power at the outset of this century, either, but it was more advanced and it benefited from the status of being *Eretz Yisrael* and *Terra Sancta*—that sliver of territory to which hundreds of millions of Jews and Christians looked as the geographic center of their spiritual worlds. Muslims, too, saw and see it as something special, for Jerusalem is one of the most holy places of their religion. These religious associations endowed the region with unique qualities.

Moreover, thanks to the Zionists, who brought European learning, institutions, and commerce, the western side came to differ from the eastern more than ever before. It became forested and productive as it had not been for centuries. It became connected to the culture of the West and the domestic policies of Great Britain and the United States. Man-for-man, the Jewish military force became one of the finest in the world.

Most important, the Zionists articulated a compelling vision of Palestine's future as the Jewish homeland. And when one party longs terribly for an object, it is not strange that others also come to value it more. The intensity of Jewish nationalism and changes on the ground inspired a reponse in kind on the Arab side—namely, the almost-overnight emergence of Palestinian nationalism. Ultimately, this sentiment originated in Zionism; had it not been for Jewish aspirations, the Arabs would no doubt have continued to view Palestine as a province of a larger entity, either Greater Syria or the Arab nation.

In short, even if east and west banks were indistinct in the distant past, this was no longer the case by the eve of World War I, and it is certainly not so today.

The fourth premise has to do with assertions *by Arabs* that Palestine and Jordan are one region. These go back to 1921 and remain politically potent even today.

The Palestine Liberation Organization has often declared Jordan a part of Palestine, and occasionally lays formal claim to it. The eighth conference of the Palestine National Council (PNC), meeting in February-March 1971, resolved that "what links Jordan to Palestine is a national bond and a national unity formed, since time immemorial, by history and culture. The establishment of one political entity in Transjordan and another in Palestine is illegal." The draft program of the tenth PNC conference (in April 1972) was even more forthright: "The need for struggle to overthrow the agent regime in Jordan, which is a front line of defense for the Zionist state and organically linked to Israel, has become no less urgent than the need for struggle against Zionist occupation." That Palestinians make up an estimated 60 percent of the East Bank population and play a major role in all aspects of life there "implies that the two peoples be brought together into a Jordanian-Palestinian national liberation front."

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Individual spokesmen have advanced even more specific claims. The PLO's first chief, Ahmad Shukeiry, argued that Jordan's 1950 annexation of the West Bank was actually an annexation of the East Bank to Palestine. For him, Palestine "stretched from the Mediterranean Sea in the west to the Syrian-Iraqi desert." In 1966, a PLO representative to Lebanon declared Jordan "an integral part of Palestine, exactly like Israel."

Jordanians have also stressed the connection between the two regions. Both of Jordan's two major rulers, the Hashemite Kings Abdallah (1921 to 1951) and Hussein (1953 to the present) have been outspoken on this issue. As early as 1926, Abdallah asserted that "Palestine is one unit. The division between Palestine and Transjordan is artificial and wasteful," a view he later repeated many times.

The establishment of Israel in 1948 hardly affected Hashemite claims to Palestine. The Jordanian prime minister declared in August 1959: "We here in Jordan, led by our great King [Hussein], are the government of Palestine, the army of Palestine, and we are the refugees." Hussein himself stated in 1956 that "the two peoples have integrated; Palestine has become Jordan, and Jordan Palestine." He also declared that "those organizations which seek to differentiate between Palestinians and Jordanians are traitors who help Zionism in its aim of splitting the Arab camp. . . . We have only one army, one political organization, and one popular recruiting system in this country."

Losing the West Bank in 1967 also made little difference for Jordanian claims. Prime Minister Zayd ar-Rifa'i told an interviewer in 1975:

> Jordan is Palestine. They have never been ruled as two separate states except during the British Mandate. Before 1918 the two banks of the Jordan River were a single state. When they returned to being a single state after 1948, it was a matter of building on the earlier unity. Their families are one, as are their welfare, affiliation, and culture.

And King Hussein asserted again in 1981 that "Jordan is Palestine and Palestine is Jordan."

After a breakdown of diplomatic efforts between Jordan and the PLO in February 1986, the King announced that he speaks "as one who feels he is a Palestinian." Soon after, Akif al-Fayiz, president of the Jordanian parliament, declared that "Jordan does not distinguish between its people on the East and on the West Bank. Our people is one and our family is one. We look forward to the day when the one family will resume its historic role." Anwar al-Khatib, former Jordanian mayor of East Jerusalem, echoed these sentiments later in 1986: "Palestine, Jordan, and Syria constituted one family until the British and French occupation in 1918, which drove the wedge of boundaries among us. We do not differentiate between our people, whether they live in Jordan, Syria, or Palestine." One could go on endlessly citing such language; it is as common as honeybees on clover.

For Israeli advocates of Jordan-is-Palestine, such claims suggest Arab agreement that Palestine and Jordan are identical. But this interpretation distorts the real character of these remarks, which are not disinterested analyses but propaganda ploys and declarations of hostile intent. Minimally, they establish diplomatic positions within the inter-Arab arena. Maximally, they assert rights to expand and rule other regions.

Thus, the periodic Palestinian claims to Hussein's kingdom reflect an intent to bring down the Hashemites as an aid to conquering Israel. Conversely, Hashemite statements have to be seen in the light of Hussein's efforts to integrate and manage East Bank Palestinians who comprise so large a proportion of the total population of Jordan. The King's dramatic but as yet partial cutting of ties with the West Bank in July suggests that he now worries less about internal stability than about the dangers created for him by the Palestinian uprising against the Israelis there.

Yet even if Jordan's disavowal of claims to sovereignty on the West Bank is a tactical twist, and even if (as many believe) Hussein hopes to divide and destroy the PLO and then return, the fact that Arab leaders have often said that Palestine equals Jordan does not make it so.

Nevertheless, what if, following the logic of Jordan-is-Palestine, Israel were to facilitate a PLO overthrow of King Hussein and encourage Yasir Arafat to take power in Amman? This scenario is not pure fantasy, for a number of leading Israelis say they look favorably on such a development. When he was Minister of Interior, Ariel Sharon adopted policies with an eye to encouraging West Bank and Gaza Arabs to cross the river. (Indeed, following the 200,000 Arabs who fled in the havoc of the June 1967 war, at least another 350,000 have crossed since September 1967.) Sharon's ulterior aim was to tip the ethnographic balance on the East Bank and thereby bring down the Hashemites.

The Israelis who favor this policy do so for three reasons. Some say that because Palestinians make up so much of the Jordanian population, are much more dynamic, and will never be convinced to see themselves as Jordanians, they will eventually take over the country anyway. The forty-year-old Hashemite effort of Jordanization must fail; in effect, Jordan is already a Palestinian state.

In answer, one should note that this seriously misreads the skill, composition, and élan of the Jordanian military. A Palestinian takeover of Jordan is far from inevitable. Moreover, the record of several minoritarian governments in the Middle East (Syria and Iraq especially) suggests that the Hashemites can last a long time. And even if

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Palestinian rule should be inevitable, why speed up the process? Why help remove a tolerable regime for one that will almost certainly be implacably hostile?

The second reason for the popularity in Israel of the Jordan-is-Palestine argument is that it subtly addresses Israel's most fundamental problem—the fact of a surging Arab population. Jewish Israelis are approaching an unpleasant choice: if Israel keeps the occupied territories, it can either preserve the Jewish character of the state by sacrificing its democracy, or the reverse. The Jordan-is-Palestine argument, by implying the permissibility of "transferring" the Arab population of "western" Palestine to the eastern part, has a potentially important role here, since it would seem to be the only way that a Greater Israel can remain both Jewish and democratic.

Yet the likely costs to Israel of such a course would be staggeringly high. In addition to the not insignificant moral price, this path might well undo the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty, profoundly alienate the U.S. government, most of Diaspora Jewry, and many Israelis themselves, and end the Soviet-Israeli rapprochement (and with it the hope of extensive immigration of Soviet Jews).

Third, some think that Israeli security would benefit if the PLO were in Amman. They hold that the PLO, having replaced the Hashemites, would let Israel be; that Israel would find it easier to handle the PLO once Arafat were facing the trials of day-to-day administration; and that international pressure against Israel would lessen once the Palestinians took control of their own state, even one limited to the East Bank.

But these speculations are probably all wrong. Were the PLO to replace Hussein in Amman, several consequences would follow which are anything but happy from the Israeli point of view.

To begin with, the PLO will never accept Jordan as a substitute for Palestine. This conclusion is as close to certain as anything can be in human affairs. While Palestinian nationalists do think the East Bank belongs to them, their real interest is permanently focused west of the river, and nothing will change this. Were Palestinians to rule the East Bank, they would not rest content, but use it as a base from which to conquer Palestine proper, including the whole of Israel.

For experience shows that aggressive leaders are encouraged by success to reach for more and more—and given the Palestinians' long record of intransigence and maximalism, it is safe to assume that this rule would exactly apply to their leaders. From Amin al-Husseini to Ahmad Shukeiry to Yasir Arafat to the shadowy figures behind the West Bank riots of recent months, Palestinian nationalist leaders have on every critical occasion succumbed to the extremist temptation. Taking over in Amman would only confirm the utility of the PLO's intransigence and boost its most vicious elements. With the Hashemites under their belt, PLO leaders would once again seriously entertain hopes that they really could destroy Israel.

Sovereign power would also allow the PLO for the first time ever to pose a serious military challenge to Israel. The days of a PLO leadership divided between Tunis and Baghdad would be over. Once the PLO shared a long and porous border with Israel, over too would be those pathetic Palestinian efforts to mount operations against Israel from the Sudan. Nor would the PLO any longer have to confront the formidable Israel Defense Forces with little more than small arms; Jordan's economy and society would almost surely be mobilized, Soviet-style, to support a vast military effort, including, we must assume these days, ballistic missiles capable of carrying chemical warheads. If Hafez al-Assad could turn the hapless soldiers of Syria into a powerful force, surely the PLO could do even better in Jordan. Such a development would make Israelis long for the bygone days of terrorism.

In addition to all this, Israel would lose the Arab government that for three generations has steadily done the most to accommodate its interests.The two major Jordanian monarchs, Abdallah and Hussein, consistently sought decent relations with the Zionists, and they worked over many years with Israel in endeavors of mutual interest.* In a manner symbolic of the two states' mutual needs, their leaders have met secretly with each other about twenty times since 1947. Surely it would be very foolish for the Israeli government to help replace a reasonable, well-behaved neighbor with a group that has been utterly consistent in its intransigence and extremism.

Israel and Jordan have important interests in common. Since radical Palestinian nationalism mortally threatens them both, the Hashemites, like Israel, gain from anything that reduces the intensity of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Thus, regardless of how much trouble the PLO challenge causes for Israel, the solution does not lie in the sacrifice of the Jordanian monarchy. King Hussein needs to be sheltered against his chief predator, not fed to it.

To be sure, it is particularly hard on Israel not to have a Jordan-is-Palestine option now—precisely when the alternative ways of dealing with

* The Jordanian government's behavior has, admittedly, not always been exemplary, but even in its two wars against Israel, in 1948 and 1967, it acted better than the other Arab regimes. Abdallah's goal in 1948 was less to eliminate the Zionist presence than to conquer territory; alone of the Arab leaders, he saw the benefits of ruling an economically dynamic and politically stable Jewish population. Hussein joined with Syria and Egypt in the June 1967 war, but he did so in good part because not to join this monumentally popular action might have destroyed his rule.

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the West Bank and Gaza Strip have also faded away. The autonomy plan envisaged in Camp David has been rendered obsolete by the Arab uprising. The Jordanian option (whereby Jordan returns to the West Bank) appears dead, repudiated by none other than King Hussein himself.

With the disappearance of these happier solutions, Israel is apparently faced with just two stark alternatives—annexing the West Bank and Gaza or handing them over to the PLO. And each of these is even worse than it first appears, for annexation would lead either to a demographic crisis in Israel or forceful transfer of population; and empowering the PLO would mean enthroning a wildly hostile state hard on Israel's borders. The first spells disaster for Israel's internal life; the second poses a wholly new external threat. Understandably, the majority of Israelis deem both these routes unacceptable.

This leaves a deadlock which increasingly frustrates those—especially American Jews and diplomats—who feel that Israel must do something. But must it? Action for its own sake does no good; the best thing under present conditions may well be to hold on and see what this volatile struggle brings next.

Further, standing still need not create a political vacuum. The moment now calls for a reaffirmation of first principles. The search for an Arab interlocutor that began over twenty years ago, when Moshe Dayan announced that he was waiting for a telephone call, must go on. Calls did eventually come from Egypt and Lebanon, even from Jordan, but never from the Palestinians or the Syrians. Until these parties do make that call, Israelis need to remain vigilant against those who would destroy their state. Further, they need to support the Jordanian monarchy's parallel efforts to fend off extremists.

People who yearn for a settlement should plead for a change of course from the Arabs, not the Israelis. Unless that happens, there is no prospect of major improvement over today's unhappy situation.

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Religion in Politics; Politics in Religion

Wilfred M. McClay

Not too many months ago, it seemed that 1988 would be the year that religion-in-politics came into its own.

To be sure, the 1980 and 1984 presidential campaigns had featured religion-in-politics galore, to an extent perhaps unrivaled since the days of William Jennings Bryan. Ronald Reagan was swept into office partly on the wave of fervent support he had carefully built up for years among evangelical and fundamentalist Christians; and he was not bashful about acknowledging their support and speaking to their concerns. "I endorse you and everything you do," candidate Reagan enthused in August 1980 to a large political-action briefing assembled under the auspices of the Religious Roundtable; and much to the astonishment of pundits, this association not only did not hurt him politically, but gave him an enormous boost, even running against the born-again Jimmy Carter. Nor did Democratic attempts in 1984 to implicate Reagan in the premillennial-dispensationalist view of Armageddon do anything to revive the fortunes of the hapless Walter Mondale.

Thus, when televangelist Pat Robertson announced, after long consideration and innumerable straws in the wind, that he would be a candidate for the Republican nomination in 1988, it seemed a logical next step for this increasingly powerful movement—and increasing reason for concern among those who disliked or feared it. In retrospect, however, the increasing power, like so much else in our public-relations-dominated politics, seems to have been more apparent than real.

The discrepancy began with Reagan himself, who, once elected, quickly made it clear that, although he liked to speak to conservative Christians' social and moral concerns, he had no intention of doing much about them. Rarely has a political pressure group been more effectively coopted, for the evangelicals' political clout was almost completely tied to Reagan; and Reagan would never risk his popularity by departing too far from the curve of mainstream public opinion. As if this were not ill fortune enough, the steady succession of fallen or besmirched televangelists made the entire movement look fraudulent and foolish. Nothing in the most lurid recesses of Sinclair Lewis's imagination could have surpassed the lurid spectacle provided by press accounts of Jimmy Swaggart's encounters in the seedy motels of Airline Highway, or of Jim Bakker's ambidextrous doings behind the closed doors of various Xanadus. In politics, nothing can long withstand the force of ridicule. Even if Robertson had been a more competent candidate than he turned out to be, his candidacy would have been doomed.

Perhaps, then, it is a fair indication of the national mood that each of the parties' 1988 nominees for President is a more or less non-ideological, pragmatic, managerial type, who does not evince more than a faint tinge of religiosity, and who does not (and will not) have any deep appeal to the religious groups that found Reagan so attractive. In short, the issues of religion-in-politics are dormant, for now. But it would be a mistake to think that they are gone for good. Certainly the history of the subject would suggest otherwise. As Mark Silk makes clear in his recent book *Spiritual Politics*,* a study of religion and politics in the United States since World War II, religion and politics have always been entwined in this country, although the form and intensity of their entanglement varies. If that is so, it would be hard to imagine that the present represents more than a momentary respite in an oft-repeated cycle.

Such entanglement is not an accident; it reflects the persistent demands placed upon religion in American political life. According to Silk, a Harvard-educated historian who is currently a reporter for the Atlanta *Journal-Constitution*, religion's relationship with politics has had constantly to balance two different tendencies, which he designates "adhesion" and "conversion." The former tendency pushes a faith's adherents to invest the political order with some of the scope and energy of their faith, sometimes even to the extent of proclaiming divine sanction for its existence and its actions. The latter tendency pulls adherents inward, toward an exclusive commitment to the faith alone, over and above any secular obliga-

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tions—a commitment both realized and signified by the act of conversion.

Silk offers the example of pagan Rome, in which there were many "adhesional," nonexclusive pagan cults and sects, whose very number and variety made it unlikely that they would siphon off devotion to the Roman state. Judaism and Christianity, however, made more exclusive claims upon their followers, claims that in the end would prove incompatible with the easygoing adhesion that characterized pagan pluralism. Hence, the question of what to render unto Caesar quickly became a problematic one.

And so it remains. In inheriting the conversionist creeds of the Western religious tradition, the United States would also be powerfully influenced by their tendency toward exclusivism. But such impulses have never been given full play in our history, for this country has also had a long tradition of civic piety—of a quasi-religious veneration of, for example, the Founders and of the Constitution—which has served to bring religious loyalties roughly into line with political ones. Of course, in its more extreme manifestations, such as the Puritan regime in Massachusetts Bay, or the crusading of 19th-century Protestants to Christianize the world at large, and extirpate the alien influences of Catholics and Jews at home, such adhesion could be a fearsome and intolerant thing. But in the more moderate, generalized, and pluralistic form dubbed "civil religion" by the sociologist Robert Bellah, it has not only helped to foster cohesion in a pluralistic society, but served the deeper purpose of legitimating the political order by relating it to transcendent purposes and ideals. One finds this tone struck preeminently in the rhetoric of Abraham Lincoln; but in fact nearly all effective American political oratory taps into classic civil-religious themes.

In the story that follows, Silk traces the ways adhesion weaves in and out of recent American religious history. He has begun the story at the ideal moment, for World War II brought a previously unequaled unity to American religion, as indeed to the American nation as a whole. One manifestation of that new-found unity was the rise to prominence in the 1940's of the idea of the Judeo-Christian tradition, an adhesional "new creed" which, he argues, had a fundamentally political purpose, although it was not without important roots in neo-orthodox Christian theology. Above all, the Judeo-Christian tradition provided a rallying point for a united democratic front—first against Hitler and fascism, and then against Communism. Indeed, some prominent exponents of the Judeo-Christian tradition, such as Reinhold Niebuhr, contended that the persistence of religious faith constituted the only real and saving difference between the secular liberalism and materialism of the West and the Communism of the East.

Hence, the 1950's were a triumphant decade of adhesionist impulses, epitomized by the addition of "In God We Trust" to all U.S. currency and the words "Under God" (taken from the Gettysburg Address) to the Pledge of Allegiance. It was also well personified in the rising influence of the interdenominational evangelist Billy Graham, who overcame the resistance of mainstream Protestant leaders to gain for himself a place at Protestantism's leadership table, as well as the confidence of many notable political figures. Graham was far more sophisticated and worldly-wise than his evangelical predecessors, and did not let conversion stand in the way of adhesion. His sermons, as Silk demonstrates, follow in the classic tradition of the American revivalist sermon, and more particularly of the Puritan jeremiad, which had a distinctly civil-religious, adhesive purpose: to chastise the nation for its sins, but in a way meant to reinvigorate its sense of purpose—"the special character, the transcendent mission, the dream, of America."

Adhesion was, it seemed, bursting out all over. Roman Catholics, now finding less and less resistance to their acceptance as full-fledged Americans, were not about to embrace the conversionist path advocated by extreme Catholic separatists, like Father Leonard Feeney of Massachusetts. Questionnaires at the time indicated that Catholics now preferred to think of themselves as Americans who happened to be Catholic, and not the reverse. And Jews too could take heart, at least for the time being, from the fact that this new national creed, the Judeo-Christian tradition, had specifically made room for them, albeit in rather cramped, hyphenated quarters. "Our form of government," President-elect Eisenhower proclaimed, vaguely, "has no sense unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith, and I don't care what it is. With us of course it is the Judeo-Christian concept but it must be a religion that all men are created equal." Thus did pluralism and adhesion make their peace with one another.

There were, of course, complaints about this dilution of faith and subordination to the secular, as in Will Herberg's 1955 book *Protestant-Catholic-Jew*. These dovetailed with that familiar critique of the 50's as a time of mindless conformity; accordingly, Americans' religious sentiments were judged tepid and unchallenging, merely a comfortable social adjunct to the comfortable life of the suburbs. Herberg deplored the essentially *social* group-identities that the three major divisions of American religion had devolved into, and was deeply skeptical of the depth of the current religious revival, longing instead for more bracing, more demanding faiths. Niebuhr, too, being an enemy of all complacencies, real or perceived, rarely passed up an oppor-

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tunity to chide the American people for their sins of spiritual pride, and to attack Billy Graham for his superficiality and lack of social commitment.

As the country approached the 1960's, and the civil-rights movement came increasingly to the fore of religious consciousness, however, both social quiescence and neo-orthodox complexity seemed to fall by the wayside. But adhesion did not—at least, not yet. One could readily find in the rhetoric of Martin Luther King, Jr. repeated allusions to the key elements of the American civil religion. In his well-known Lincoln Memorial address, for example, biblical and patriotic allusions abounded; and in his "Letter from Birmingham Jail" he proclaimed that protesters "were in reality standing up for what is best in the American dream and for the most sacred values in our Judeo-Christian heritage . . . the sacred heritage of our nation and the eternal will of God are embodied in our echoing demands." Social activism and adhesion were not incompatible; King's rhetoric was very different, in this respect, from that of the decidedly non-adhesional Christian abolitionist, William Lloyd Garrison (1805-79), whose most famous public act was the burning of the Constitution.

The spirit of Garrison, however, was increasingly abroad in the land, as openly adversarial religious leaders like the Berrigan brothers and Bishop James Pike began coming to the fore, along with a counterculture that strove to decouple established faiths (when it did not disdain them altogether) from the existing political order. The postwar period of adhesional unity crumbled under the force of the period's social upheaval, and it remains unrestored, despite various efforts, including those of the religious New Right, to rediscover or rebuild it. Yet Silk concludes with the suggestion that the baby-boom generation, having now grown up, moved to the suburbs, and begun their own families, may be gravitating toward the established churches out of the same need for stable, child-rearing values that their parents felt. The pendulum, in short, may be swinging back in the direction of a kind of 50's-style adhesion, *mutatis mutandis*.

Such, in any event, is the story as Silk tells it. A brief, stylish book which wears its considerable learning lightly, *Spiritual Politics* skillfully compresses a great deal of recent American history. It has many of the strengths of good journalism—a jaunty and memorable style, narrative verve, immediacy, and a fine knack for locating the single revelatory example that can illuminate a multitude of events. Silk is a gifted writer, and anyone who thinks the history of religion a dull subject will be in for a pleasant surprise upon taking up this book.

But it also suffers from some of the weaknesses of journalism, weaknesses that are probably inseparable from its virtues. These extend far beyond the author's chronic inability to restrain his faintly satirical tone or his clever epigrams, which fly a little too fast and thick for the book's good, and which are too often made to stand in for more detailed analysis. There is a deeper problem: as the above summary indicates, Silk has elected to concentrate almost exclusively upon a narrative account of the doings and words of religious leaders and intellectuals. These are the "players," so to speak, in his story; the people who matter, the opinion leaders, the men whose names and views and foibles would be likely to turn up in the pages of the New York *Times*—the Billy Grahams, Henry Van Dusens, James Pikes, Harvey Coxes, Reinhold Niebuhrs. Valuable as this perspective is, it also oversimplifies the enormous complexity of religious experience. Religion cannot be covered the way one covers Capitol Hill—least of all in a country like the United States.

As the historian John Lukacs has shrewdly observed, the history of a democracy is particularly difficult to write, precisely because the actual evolution of its ideas, sentiments, and institutions may be (and often are) quite at odds with what appears on the surface. For all of its narrative energy, Silk's account rarely penetrates beneath the surface to tell us what sorts of changes have occurred in individual churches and synagogues, how individual Americans have thought and felt about their religious commitments, and how those thoughts and feelings reflect a changing, even remolding, of American religion from the inside.

Religion is, at bottom, a social institution; churches are "moral communities," in Durkheim's parlance, and closer attention to those communities is likely to shed a good deal of light on the roots of the country's spiritual politics. The study of 19th-century American religion, for example, is inseparable from—indeed, practically synonymous with—the history of immigration and of ethnic rivalries. This is not to say that Silk ought to have written his history "from the bottom up," whatever that cant phrase may mean; only that religious history always and inevitably has a profoundly social dimension, one which ought not to be ignored.

Nor does his principal analytical leitmotif, the tension between the forces of "adhesion" and "conversion," always help to further our understanding of American religion. It fits the particular circumstances of the 1950's admirably; it is especially useful in understanding the tensions within Roman Catholicism during those years, as well as the rise and fall of the Judeo-Christian tradition. But its analytical utility drops off sharply as the story approaches the present, where the dualism appears to slacken, and finally collapses entirely. Jerry Falwell's brand of Christianity, for example, is every bit as devoted to adhesion as to conversion; meanwhile, plenty of liberal Protestants are equally indifferent to both. Moreover, as the book's exposition proceeds, the meaning of

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these terms becomes progressively fuzzier and less manageable. Sometimes adhesion even seems to be conflated with pluralism or ecumenism or, by the book's end, with complacent middle-class suburban churchgoing and books like *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*. All of which indicates that the story of postwar American religion cannot quite be captured by the interplay of these two forces.

A RATHER different approach to the same subject, and ultimately a far more rewarding one, appears in a new study, *The Restructuring of American Religion*, by the sociologist Robert Wuthnow.* In fact, the two books could hardly be more different. Some of the differences work to Silk's favor, for where his book is lively and concrete, Wuthnow's is relentlessly bloodless and abstract (although, one notes in gratitude, virtually jargon-free), and frequently operates on such a high level of generalization that one must strain one's imagination to connect the argument with anything familiar or concrete. But the effort is well worth making. Once one adjusts to the author's prose, what one finds is an extremely penetrating, nuanced, and largely convincing account of what is really happening to American religion—an account worthy of comparison with, say, Herberg's *Protestant-Catholic-Jew*, or H. Richard Niebuhr's *The Social Sources of Denominationalism*, although Wuthnow's argument ultimately supersedes both.

For Wuthnow, one factor seems more important than all others in explaining the evolution of postwar American religion: the steady growth of the state. In this observation, he confirms the foresight of Tocqueville, who predicted that as governments assumed many of the functions of private associations, such as churches and community organizations, those organizations that remained would be progressively weakened or radically altered. "The more [the state] stands in the place of associations," Tocqueville wrote, "the more will individuals, losing the notion of combining together, require its assistance: these are causes and effects that unceasingly create each other." Like a powerful magnet set down in the midst of scattered iron filings, the modern state reorients the entire field of social forces, and rearranges the constituent elements in its image. Nothing can stand entirely aloof from it for long.

"Causes and effects that unceasingly create each other." Most of the controversial issues that have roiled this country's spiritual politics in the past several decades—school prayer and other forms of public religious expression, abortion, tax-exemption for religious organizations, the proper provision of social welfare, nuclear strategy, and so on—have been responses to actions of the state, and have revolved around "the increasingly problematic boundary between church and state." Hence, the crucial divisions in American religion are no longer denominational ones; nor are they the divisions among Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish "identities" once posited by Herberg. They are political divisions—liberal vs. conservative. But Wuthnow does not attribute this development simply to the secularization of American life—a view he rejects in any event. The process is more complex, a simultaneous politicization and privatization of American religion, which he follows from the close of World War II, focusing most of his attention on the evolution of the Christian churches.

LIKE Silk, Wuthnow is impressed by the way American religious organizations flourished as never before in the immediate postwar years. The widespread prosperity and surging demographics of those times ensured that there would be swelling congregations and expanding construction budgets. And the ominous prospects latent in a tense, post-Hiroshima world, although deeply troubling to religious leaders, also energized them with a profound sense of purpose—and their organizations grew to meet the demands. Indeed, the hierarchies of the established denominations, as well as numerous interdenominational and ecumenical organizations then springing into being, quickly became sizable bureaucracies with full-time professional staffs, and budgets in the many millions of dollars.

Paradoxically, however, this exponential organizational growth was accompanied by an increased emphasis upon religion as the champion of the individual, in a world threatened not only by totalitarianism but also by the dehumanizing effects of vast, impersonal institutions. Such concerns were at the center not only of the strong anti-Communism of the 50's but also of such influential works of social criticism as David Riesman's *The Lonely Crowd* and William Whyte's *The Organization Man*. This concern, as well as the ecumenical drive to deemphasize formal and doctrinal differences between denominations, gave rise to a highly individualized approach to faith, one eminently compatible with longstanding American traits and supported by the clear-cut disjunction, then observed by both conservative and liberal authorities, between worldly realities and religious visions.

In time, Wuthnow argues, "the corporate body" of each individual church "became subtly transposed into a service agency for the fulfillment of its individual members." But as the churches' adminstrative bureaucracies grew, and their expanding congregations became more socially heterogeneous, their purposes became more diffuse; individuals increasingly gravitated toward more narrowly focused kinds of association, where they could bring a more intense or communal dimension to their religious practice. Thus, even as

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denominational bureaucracies were growing and prospering, denominational identity was diminishing as a force in the minds of millions of individual Americans; instead, many members began putting their best energies into "special purpose groups," many of them interdenominational groups with more or less political goals, and large offices in New York or Washington perfectly situated to pursue those aims. The modern American church had become restructured into a "megachurch," with a "vast network of committees, classes, community services, choirs, schools, youth programs, and interest groups"; overlaid upon this structure were many dozens of "highly institutionalized organizations oriented to special-interest groups within denominations."

The parallels with what was happening to American politics in the same years—as, for example, in the Balkanization of parties into special-interest groups oriented according to occupation, gender, race, sexual preference, age, etc.—are no coincidence. They further confirm Wuthnow's insight that religious organizations have taken on the lineaments of political ones.

To be sure, many special-purpose groups have no political dimension; there are, for example, groups founded for Christians who happen to be big-time athletes, or drag racers, or magicians, or pilots, or musicians, or alcoholics. There are prison ministries, Bible study groups, charismatic groups, healing ministries. Even the proliferation of these organizations, however, has contributed to the internal division of churches and denominations, by drawing members' energies away from the whole, and into highly specific channels.

More important, in any case, are the many organizations, large and small, with an explicitly political focus: Coalition for Religious Freedom, Moral Majority, National Federation for Decency, National Council of Churches, Christian Voice, Americans United for Separation of Church and State, Christian Law Association, World Conference on Religion and Peace, Society of Separationists, Americans for God, American Baptist Black Caucus, and so on, and on, list without end. There are organizations for gay Mormons, for disarmament, for the handicapped, for the divorced, for women's rights, for any and every cause. "Despite a formal wall of separation between church and state," Wuthnow concludes, "a growing mass of religious organizations has come into being with the state very much a part of their specific objectives."

Wuthnow has used survey data to confirm something most observers would suspect: that some people may participate in more than one special-purpose group, and, more significantly, that there is a predictable pattern to their participation (and nonparticipation), a pattern that has little to do with their denomination. He has found two clusters of activity groupings, one "liberal" and one "conservative," and this liberal-conservative split cuts cleanly across denominational lines, reflecting profound and growing intra-denominational divisions. Hence the frequently encountered phenomenon that, say, a conservative Methodist may feel and have far more in common with a conservative Catholic, or even a conservative Jew, than with a liberal of his own denomination. Three decades ago, such experiences were exceedingly rare; that they have now become commonplace does not augur particularly well for the denominations.

In one of the most interesting of Wuthnow's findings, the single best predictor of the category to which an individual will gravitate is level of education. Those who have been to college are far more likely to be, or to have become, religious liberals—liberal in their theological attitudes (for example, rejection of scriptural literalism), in their choice of causes (anti-nuclear coalitions rather than prison ministries; holistic health groups rather than Bible study groups), in their social attitudes (favorable view of social activism, homosexuality, feminism), and in their support for a specific political agenda (environmentalism, disarmament, affirmative action, Palestinian state). In the past, denominationalism correlated neatly with ethnicity, region, and class; think, for example, of all that "Episcopalian" once conjured up. Today the crucial distinctions are increasingly *political*, they exist within and across denominations, and they correlate more readily with educational levels than with any other single factor.

Here, too, the indirect influence of the state in furthering the liberal-conservative split cannot be neglected. It was the United States government that enthusiastically pressed the extension of higher education after World War II, through the generous provisions of the G.I. Bill and unprecedented investment in research and development—all of which fueled the pell-mell postwar growth of colleges and universities. Between 1960 and 1970, higher-education enrollments increased from 3.6 million to 8.6 million, or nearly 139 percent. By the latter year, one in three college-age Americans was attending an institution of higher learning. If mainline American religion has shown an increasingly leftward tilt in the postwar era, the expansion of higher education must be accounted a significant factor in that development. And Wuthnow's argument has the interesting side effect of providing strong confirmation for the much-maligned notion that there is a "new class" whose distinctive worldview, virtually identical with that of Wuthnow's religious liberals, is rooted in and promulgated through the distinctive culture of American higher education.

In the 1940's and 1950's, differences were downplayed, and the American civil religion saw to it that there was a powerful sense of the nation's fundamental meaning—its legitimating myth, as

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Wuthnow puts it. Now, he says, we have not one but two legitimating myths in our civil religion: one to which conservatives appeal, and one to which liberals appeal. Religious conservatives are likely to point to the providential destiny of America, its special place in human history and the divine order, as validation of traditional American values and institutions. Religious liberals are more likely to disparage patriotism, and to speak in broad, universalistic tones of the country's moral responsibility to use its wealth to make the world a more just and equitable place; and they point for justification not only to biblical sources but also to the egalitarian rhetoric of the Declaration of Independence and the language of "human rights."

As the conflict between liberals and conservatives has become more heated, the common ground has shrunk. As a consequence, the civil religion has lost its cohesive force. Hence, there has been strong reason for Americans to look for purely secular legitimating myths—and to look in their leaders for a cool, analytical, pragmatic, value-neutral, technocratic, managerial style, the style that may well be in the ascendancy in the presidential politics of 1988.

If the past is any guide, however, such politics will not likely last for long; not in a country that is, in Sidney Mead's fine phrase, "a nation with the soul of a church." Even the most uncontroversial secular legitimations have a way of drifting back to religious ones for ultimate support, and the classic patterning of a more openly religious sensibility is usually very much alive in the most powerful secular appeals—in the jeremiads of influential social critics against greed and narcissism, for example, or in the aura of divine judgment which is so often projected onto stock-market crashes, or medical emergencies, or (especially) environmental problems.

In short, pragmatic grounds for consensus will not be likely to displace the deeper need Americans have always had to link their political and social being to a transcendent order and universalistic mission. We can expect more outbursts of spiritual politics. And judging from the recent successes of the Reverend Jesse Jackson, as well as the humiliation of the TV preachers, the fire next time may well come from the Left. But no one can predict such matters with any certainty, for the spirit still bloweth where it listeth.

Still, the institutional restructuring described in Wuthnow's book suggests that something more complex than pendulum-swinging is at work. Religion has become at once more private and more political in the age of televangelists and of the naked public square (to use Richard John Neuhaus's term). Wuthnow tries to maintain a social scientist's neutrality toward many of these phenomena, dutifully exploring the possibility that the changes he has described may represent a functional and healthy adaptation to a changing world. But his evidence paints a darker picture, of institutions devolving into mirror images of the bureaucracies and pressure groups from which they increasingly take their cues, their agenda, and even their thoughts. Indeed, for all of religion's greater and greater political involvement, it is not really a first-string player in that politics. It is more like a cheerleader on the sidelines, who watches and stamps and shouts as the boys from the secular city slug it out on the gridiron. Religion used to have other, better things to do with its weekends.

Perhaps religion itself cannot be blamed for the fact that, in an era in which the state intrudes into nearly all aspects of our lives, politics seems to be the only game in town. Yet the most important task facing American religion may, in fact, lie in *resistance* to precisely those trends Wuthnow describes so convincingly. That will not be easy. One is reminded of the minister who began the Sunday prayers by saying, "O Lord, have you read this morning's New York *Times*?" It is not wrong to enlist the forces of religion in secular causes. Sometimes it is morally necessary. But what may be more difficult, and more necessary, is to keep alive the sense of another, different, space in which we live and move and have our being—without which sense religion is little more than formalism or dogma or niceness. We have worried loud and long about the effects of religion on politics; but, as Wuthnow repeatedly laments, we have given precious little thought to the effect of politics on religion.

Perhaps, after all these abstractions, I may be permitted a concrete personal example, which illuminates something of what is being lost, at least in the mainline Protestant environment most familiar to me. A couple of years ago, I attended a funeral service for a young woman, a secretary at the university with which I was then affiliated. She was an attractive, generous, incandescent soul, beloved by everyone she worked with, no mean feat in such a contentious setting. She had died, tragically, in giving birth to her second child—a death even more bitterly shocking than an automobile accident or a street-corner shooting, for it seemed almost too atavistic to be possible. How, in this day and age, in a major American city with all the most advanced medical technologies available, could such a thing still happen?

Evidently the same question was on the mind of the minister who stepped up to deliver the eulogy to the overflow crowd of mourners that day. But where the rest of us had been stunned into reflective silence, awed and chastened by this reminder of the slender thread by which our lives hang, the minister had other things in mind. He did not talk about the deceased, except to praise her laughter briefly and imprecisely, leaving one with the feel-

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ing that he had not even known her. (I later found out this was not so.) He did not try to comfort her family and friends. Nor did he challenge us to remember the hard words of the Lord's Prayer, "Thy Will be done." Instead, he smoothly launched into a well-oiled tirade against the misplaced priorities of our society, in which billions of dollars were being poured into "Star Wars" research while young women such as this one were being allowed to die on the operating table.

That was all the minister had to say. His eulogy was, in effect, a pitch for less federal spending on defense and more spending on the development of medical technology. There was also an unmistakable hint that the young woman's doctors might well have been guilty of malpractice, but would of course be insulated from the consequences of their mistakes by our corrupt system. The only thing omitted was an injunction that we write our Congressman, or Ralph Nader, about this outrage.

I could hardly believe my ears. Had the minister set out to desecrate her memory rather than honor it, he could hardly have done a better job. But leave aside the eulogy's unspeakable vulgarity, and its unintentional cruelty to the woman's family. Leave aside the flabby and clichéd quality of language and speech. Leave aside the self-satisfied tone of easy moral outrage. Leave aside the fashionable opinions, too, since honorable and intelligent men and women can disagree about these things. I am even willing to concede, for the sake of argument, that the minister may have been right in everything he said. All these considerations are beside the point. Nothing can alter the fact that he failed us, failed her, and failed his calling, by squandering a precious moment for the sake of a second-rate stump speech, and by forcing us to hold our sorrow back in the privacy of our hearts, at the very moment it needed a common expression. That moment can never be recovered.

Nothing that religion does is more important than equipping us to endure life's passages, by helping us find meaning in pain and loss. With meaning, many things are bearable; but our eulogist did not know how to give it to us. All he had to offer were his political desiderata. For my own part, I left the funeral more shaken and unsteady than before. Part of my distress arose from frustration, that my deepest thoughts (and those of many around me, as I later discovered) were so completely unechoed in this ceremony and in these words. But another part of my distress must have stemmed from a dark foreboding that I was witnessing another kind of malpractice, and another kind of death.

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In Praise of Richard Nixon

Paul Johnson

RICHARD NIXON remains the most enigmatic of American Presidents. He has been around longer than any other public man in the West, apart from François Mitterrand. His congressional career stretches back to 1947. He has been involved in great affairs since 1953, which makes him senior to anyone at the top level with the exception of Andrei Gromyko. He still travels, sees the eminent, writes widely-read books, and is constantly consulted by those in office. We ought to know everything about him by now. Yet we know very little.

It is impossible to predict how historians a hundred years from now will judge Nixon, a man whose career testifies both to the positive power of will and endurance in public life and to the destructive power of the East Coast establishment, his mortal enemy. His character is elusive; the inner man is almost totally inaccessible. What are we to make of this clever, articulate, energetic, wise, withdrawn, and solitary-seeming man? In particular, why did he arouse such overwhelming and persistent hostility among America's educated classes?

Reading his latest book, *1999: Victory Without War*,* a survey of world prospects over the next decade, suggesting ways in which American policy-makers can meet the challenge of a more intelligent and sophisticated Soviet leadership, I find that two complementary explanations suggest themselves, the first political, the second personal.

As a man Nixon is complex, but as a political thinker he is fairly straightforward. His views have changed little in forty years. He is a conservative realist. He does not believe in utopias or millenarian settlements. He thinks there will always be genuine conflicts of interest—political, economic, military as well as ideological—between nations, especially great powers, which cannot be resolved by good will alone. "Only when countries have accepted the existence of conflict," he writes, "and sought to manage it through a balance of power, have enduring periods of general peace resulted."

For this reason Nixon has always insisted both on national strength and continuing negotiations. It is the theme of his new book and the theme of his life. Each without the other is dangerous. Both of them together, in the right combination, constitute the true road to national security.

In the late 1940's, Nixon made himself notorious for insisting that America's national strength must not be undermined from within. In the late 1950's he was associated with the Eisenhower-Dulles global-security system, but also with the summitry which marked the end of the decade. As President, he maintained the effectiveness of the U.S. deterrent to the limit of the political possibilities of the day, but he also ended the cold war in the Far East by opening windows to China—a great historic achievement. In retirement he has constantly pointed out that, while the United States should welcome and encourage any sign of liberalization in Soviet Russia, it should never confuse such changes with a Soviet abandonment of basic foreign-policy aims. He repeats this message with great force in the present volume.

All this is clear enough, but it does not, in itself, explain the antagonism he has always aroused among liberals. It is, I suspect, a question of tone. Nixon has no political small talk. Probably because it is not in his nature, he does not oil the wheels of ideological discourse. He cannot, or will not, and in any event does not make the smallest genuflection to any liberal shibboleth. He does not mask his views in emollient clichés. He is direct; as the liberals would say, crude.

Let us take one example. We all of us, liberals included, know in our hearts that the United Nations has failed. Nixon says so openly, without qualification, and without much regret. Moreover, he insists, in equally unvarnished words, on explaining why: "What moves the world for good or ill is power, and no sovereign nation will give up its power to the UN or any other body—not now and not ever. This is an immutable aspect of national character." Liberals find this kind of statement hard to take, and all the harder in that they have an uneasy feeling it may be true, or at least partly true. But their resentment tends to focus not on the harsh facts of global existence but on the man who has had the bad manners to draw attention to them.

What makes Nixon's insistence that the world is run by realpolitik and national interest even more objectionable to liberals is that he is as much an idealist as they are; but in his way, not theirs. Streetwise in the global metropolis, Nixon is nonetheless in many respects an old-fashioned evangelical American patriot. He rose by hard work from humble origins to the world's highest office. He is deeply grateful to the fair and free society which made such an ascent possible, and he is anxious to pay his debt to it. He also believes, as all Americans up to recent decades were taught to believe, that providence has been good to America as a whole, and that America as a society and a

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great power has incurred reciprocal obligations. He states openly: "Almost nowhere else on earth are people as secure and as prosperous as in the United States. Both our great power and our great blessings challenge us to adopt policies in both foreign and domestic affairs whose ultimate goal is to make the world safer and better."

Liberals find this tone of voice, coming on top of the realpolitik, insufferable. They feel it is sanctimonious, hypocritical, sly, self-seeking. They believe it springs from a devious nature incapable of truth. The idea that it might be totally and passionately sincere is inconceivable to them. From the start, then, liberal antipathy to Nixon was and is based on a profound misunderstanding of his moral character.

Dislike is deepened by social contempt. It is often assumed by foreigners, and believed by Americans themselves, that class plays no part in American politics. This may be generally true, but there are certainly exceptions, and the anti-Nixon syndrome is one of them. Nixon was a hard-working man who raised himself not from romantic poverty but from the dullest of lower-middle-class backgrounds. He did so early and quickly and without acquiring any of the social graces or eccentricities or gimmicks or rhetorical flourishes or parlor tricks which make a climber interesting. Nor did he ever learn to hide his obvious ambition or cloak it in the progressive sentiments of the day.

LIKE everyone else in politics, Nixon wanted fame and power, but he did not know how to make his yearnings culturally respectable. There was nothing about him—his school, his tastes, his choice of language, his friends, his interests, his heroes, his reading—that was remotely fashionable. He could at times be gauche, say the wrong thing, make the awkward, grating gesture. To East Coast liberals from assured, easy backgrounds and Ivy League schools, he appeared to be everything they most detested: brash, self-seeking, uncultured, greedy for money and power, devoid of *noblesse oblige*, hard and materialistic. They could not bear the thought of being ruled by him and his like. Immediately after the 1960 presidential election, a victorious John F. Kennedy contemptuously summed up this feeling: Nixon, he said, "went out like he came in—no class."

To a European, this comment, coming from the son of a man who was little better than a financial gangster, is full of ironies. The Kennedys, to an outside observer, far from embodying the principle of American legitimacy, appear rather to illustrate the rapacity with which a predatory immigrant clan exploits the opportunities America offers: the unscrupulous father amassing wealth so that his indulged and conscienceless offspring may buy their way into office and power. Visiting Washington as British Prime Minister shortly after Kennedy was elected, Harold Macmillan commented: "It's rather like watching the Borgia brothers take over a respectable North Italian town." As time goes by, and the sins of the Kennedys multiply with the generations, the comparison seems ever more apt.

But whatever their moral shortcomings—and these were seen less clearly in the 1960's than now—the younger Kennedys possessed enviable social advantages. They not only had a lot of money but had never been put to the coarsening trouble of earning it. They made the appropriate cultural noises. They had the right academic and media connections, and could buy more if necessary. They had their own court historians and tame editors. They spoke the liberal vernacular with zeal if not from inner conviction. Most important of all, they exercised, like any other self-assured aristocracy, however ersatz, a powerful appeal over the intelligentsia, which will always prefer a graceful prince to a self-made man. To the intellectuals, and to East Coast liberals generally, the 1960 election was between "us" and "them," a Manichean struggle between enlightenment and materialism.

In fact it was one of the most corrupt elections of modern times, with the Democratic machine forced to play all its grubby cards to get Kennedy elected at all. He won by a whisker in circumstances which will always make the validity of his election dubious. It says a lot for Nixon's old-fashioned notions of patriotism and decorum—"no class" notwithstanding—that he refused to challenge the result. And so it was that Camelot came into being, the glittering antithesis of Nixonian suburbia: in the foreground, cerebral rhetoric, haute couture, patronage of the arts; in the background, sexual athletics with Mafia molls, shielded by a compliant press.

But in due course the cloud-capp'd palaces were magicked away by an assassin's bullet. In Lyndon Johnson, the liberal establishment found itself landed with a much less congenial figure. If you lifted the lid on Johnson a whiff of unmistakable sulfur emerged; in time, indeed, he began to seem to many liberals a far more obvious incarnation of evil than their old enemy, Nixon. In the process of destroying LBJ, however, the East Coast media overlooked the fact that success would open the way for none other than Nixon himself, since Hubert Humphrey, Johnson's chosen successor, was inevitably and fatally damaged in the demolition process.

SO IN 1968 Nixon became President after all, and great was the gnashing of teeth in the liberal middle and upper classes. His was the first postwar administration from which the East Coast establishment was largely excluded, its places taken by men, often Californians, anti-intellectuals, and provincials, who aroused in the liberal soul a peculiar detestation. That Nixon set about fulfilling his campaign promise of scaling down, then ending, the Vietnam war was neither here nor there: once again, it was the tone that was objectionable.

Nixon made no secret of the fact that he disliked the metropolitan media. Worse, he developed an alarming skill at speaking over the head of the media directly to the American people, taking it upon himself to voice the hopes and fears of what he termed "the silent majority." While never exactly popular—incapable, perhaps, of being popular with any wide section of

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the community—he became an extremely effective populist.

If the Nixon victory of 1968 was hard for the liberals to bear, his landslide of 1972 was insupportable, particularly since Nixon had openly accepted the Democratic candidacy of Senator George McGovern as an opportunity for the contest he had sought: Middle America against progressive *pandaemonium*. "Here is a situation," Nixon exultantly told his staff, "where the Eastern establishment media finally has a candidate who almost totally shares their views." He added that the "real ideological bent of the New York *Times*, the Washington *Post*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, and the three TV networks" was "on the side of amnesty, pot, abortion, confiscations of wealth (unless it is theirs), massive increases in welfare, unilateral disarmament, reduction of our defenses, and surrender in Vietnam." At last, then, "the country will find out whether what the media has been standing for during these last five years really represents the majority thinking."

Nixon's overwhelming victory, carrying the Electoral College 521 to 17 and picking up over 60 percent of the popular vote, ought to have settled the matter. But it did not. Although the events which led up to Watergate and Nixon's abdication are extremely complicated, one salient fact must be borne in mind. The Eastern liberal establishment never really admitted the legitimacy of the Nixon administration. From the start, the media interests which spoke for the establishment treated the Nixon presidency as in some metaphysical sense an outlaw regime whose true, unconstitutional character would eventually be exposed. The powerful barons of the Eastern press and TV felt themselves morally and constitutionally entitled to snatch back the power he had secured from the voters by (as they saw it) chicanery. All they needed was a pretext.

Nixon played into their hands. His deep sense of insecurity, reinforced by what was now almost a paranoid hatred and fear of the press, led him to confuse a perfectly justified desire to prevent the media from publishing state secrets—as they had done in the case of the Pentagon Papers and other documents—with the routine skulduggery of party-political espionage. The result was the Watergate mess.

IN ESSENCE, Watergate *was* a mess and nothing more. The Nixon administration's record of misuse of power and *raison d'état* was no worse than that of Truman and Eisenhower, and considerably better than Franklin D. Roosevelt's. There was none of the personal corruption which had marked the rule of Lyndon Johnson, let alone the gross immoralities and security risks of John F. Kennedy's White House. Nixon's sins were venial and sprang mostly from misplaced loyalty. The notion that he plotted an assault on the Constitution and the rule of law is a malicious invention.

Indeed, the way in which the opportunities offered by Watergate were exploited by the Eastern media, aided by a hostile Congress—a key element in the story—and by a section of the legal establishment to whom Nixon was anathema, is a frightening example of how the will of a popular majority can be frustrated and overturned by the skillful manipulation of press and TV. This was the first media *Putsch* in history, as ruthless and anti-democratic as any military coup by bemedaled generals with their sashes and sabers. It is obvious that Nixon, a responsible and experienced statesman preoccupied with the international problems of the early 1970's, not least the appalling Middle East crisis of autumn 1973 and its disastrous economic aftermath, consistently underestimated the unscrupulousness of his media enemies and their willingness to sacrifice the national interest in the pursuit of their institutional vendetta.

So great was the inequity of Nixon's downfall that future historians may well conclude he would have been justified in allowing events to take their course and in subjecting the nation to the prolonged paralysis of a public impeachment, which at least would have given him the opportunity to defend himself by due process of law. But once again his patriotism took precedence over his self-interest, and he cut short the national agony by a voluntary abdication. In defeat he was dignified and not at all disposed to recriminate. The episode wrecked his official career, but going through the fire strengthened and refined his moral character. By a curious paradox Richard Nixon was one of the very few people who emerged from the Watergate affair with credit. But he remained, and remains, as mysterious as ever.

FALLEN statesmen rarely rise again. But it pays them to live long. Nixon, like Herbert Hoover before him, has survived nearly all his enemies. And he has made much better use of his retirement than Hoover did. Few men have been more successful at putting the past behind them and looking firmly into the future.

His new book is only one example of the assiduity and genuine excitement with which Nixon scans the distant horizons of geopolitics. There are few retired Washington giants—Henry Kissinger is an exception—who keep themselves so well briefed on the state of the world, or who have more worthwhile observations to make about it. In its modest way, *1999: Victory Without War* is an excellent geopolitical primer, which, if academics were not so prejudiced, could well serve as an introductory textbook in courses in political science.

By the term "victory" in the title, Nixon does not mean an ideological or economic conquest but rather a process of persuasion whereby the freedoms generally recognized as desirable and productive can be more widely, and eventually universally, spread. He looks first at the present posture of the two superpowers. Then, in three carefully argued chapters, he shows how the United States can peacefully prevent the Soviets from making risky forward moves, how it can match and refute Soviet propaganda in the uncommitted world, and, not least, how it can effectively negotiate with Moscow to reduce tension and arms budgets.

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Nixon next turns to the three economic-growth areas—Western Europe, which he calls "the fragmented giant"; Japan, the "reluctant giant"; and China, the "awakened giant"—which will in his judgment expand the present two superpowers into five, and shows how each of them can play a constructive role in the negotiation-from-strength process he envisages. He then provides a survey of Third World theaters of conflict where competition between economic and political systems is most intense.

NIXON'S final chapter concerns the United States itself, and is a plea that Americans will reinforce their material success by a return to the pristine idealism of the men who created what he calls "the animating principles of our country." In his view, the new thinking which Gorbachev is urging his Soviet comrades to adopt should be matched by a fundamental reappraisal of America's conduct and role. Nixon wants Americans to be remembered "not just as a good people who took care of themselves without doing harm to others" but as a "great people" who went "beyond the call of duty" in helping to enlarge the freedoms enjoyed all over the world.

This is the kind of traditional nationalist idealism which Nixon's critics find insincere and repellent. To me, as an outsider who feels none of this emotional hostility to the ex-President, it seems patently sincere, almost painfully so. Moreover, I think it strikes echoes among a very large number of ordinary Americans. One of Nixon's greatest strengths is his nose for what the voters feel at any given time. There can be few men whose judgment of the American political scene is so shrewd and penetrating, as well as surprisingly objective.

Most ex-Presidents are anxious to offer their advice to those who succeed them, and find themselves consulted often out of mere courtesy. Nixon's advice, by contrast, is eagerly solicited and often taken. He probably exercises more political influence than any other Western statesman not actually in office. Considering the depths of degradation from which he has climbed, this is a remarkable achievement.

In thus rehabilitating himself, Nixon has displayed courage, endurance, persistence, patience, skill, and—there is no other word for it—magnanimity. This greatness of heart is something his enemies never dreamed he possessed, and helps to explain their misunderstanding of his nature. "No class": today, the cruel snobbery of the phrase reflects solely on the man who uttered it, and whose own reputation declines with every fresh unveiling of the record. To the contrary: the last fifteen years have shown that Richard Nixon has a lot of class. But it remains to be seen whether history will give him the justice his contemporaries denied him.

Clean Dancing

Peter Shaw

AMONG THE many targets of the revolutionary cultural spirit of the 1960's, the original and arguably most important were sexual roles and the relationship between the sexes. And in the 1980's, among the many signs of a wish to return to pre-60's cultural styles—nostalgia for the music, dress, and design of earlier decades; the revival of realism in painting and more formal styles in the other arts—the most significant has probably been the at least partial restoration of traditional sexual roles. In the 80's, even feminists have come to extol the feminine virtues, the importance of motherhood, and the advantages of withholding sexual favors.

One minor but instructive example of the 80's turnabout is the return of ballroom dancing—social dancing, as it was once significantly called—signaled be the success of the unattractively titled but pleasantly nostalgic movie *Dirty Dancing* and the Broadway show *Tango Argentino*. Tours by companies who perform ballroom dance exclusively (including one that recreates the dances from *Dirty Dancing*) and the public-television broadcasting of the United States Ballroom competitions add to the unmistakable impression of a revival.

Couples dancing, it is true, has not been restored to its role as a social ritual, or a means of meeting members of the opposite sex, and actual participation in dancing has so far been limited to a few dance-instruction studios, a few reopened nightclubs, and—typically enough of the present age—a few health clubs where dance instruction has been introduced for its exercise benefits. The restoration of Rockefeller Center's Rainbow Room,

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with its revolving dance floor and its two continuously playing dance bands, attests at once to the nostalgic attraction of social dancing and to its relatively limited appeal. Similarly, the sympathetic press coverage of the room's reopening may indicate a climate of approval for social dancing but nothing like a return to its former status as an entrenched institution important enough to come under attack.

For the social-dance couple that was split up in the 60's *was* attacked, and in an apparent spirit of liberation. The woman was freed first from the male lead and then, as dancers began casually switching partners and couples began to join one another in foursomes and larger groups, she was unbound from her dependence on a single partner altogether. Nothing better expressed the breakdown of the old relationship between the sexes—or, rather, expressed the 60's view of that relationship, namely, that it was male-dominated—than the separation of dance partners.

But in social dancing, as in so much else, the 60's view was wrong. True, the male initiates the steps, but the apparent significance of that fact is always belied by what happens in practice. As in life, so in the dance partnership, things work out far better for the woman than outward formalities would seem to indicate.

THE defining bond between man and woman in the social-dance partnership lies in a dynamic that is invisible to a casual observer. Though the man appears to be holding and controlling the woman, the two of them are actually together constructing a "frame" or circle with their arms. Each exerts a degree of force on his side of the frame, slightly pushing against the other. When the man moves forward, the woman moves back without diminishing either the shape of her side of the frame or her counterforce. When he moves backward, she pushes forward on the thrust of that same force. In other words, not compliance but resistance makes the male lead possible.

To be sure, it remains true that in dancing the male and not the female is always the one who leads. But if the woman thereby gives something up, the compensations are considerable. This is because the purpose of the male lead is to guide the couple toward a space on the dance floor that will permit the woman to step out and execute those attractive maneuvers that social dance reserves for her alone. Somewhat in the manner of the male ballet dancer, the man in social dance puts his partner on display. He guides and physically supports her, himself melting into the background. Unlike the ballet dancer, however, he does not have his own solo.

In dancing since the 60's *both* sexes are put on display, and in obviously sensual ways. In social dancing, by contrast, the male not only has no such role, but also is little able to turn his attention to the erotic displays of other men's partners. Having the lead in itself obliges him to concentrate on the steps and patterns he plans to execute. As he initiates a movement, he must address himself both mentally and in physical attitude toward his partner, surveying the floor only briefly and in a general way to avoid a collision. His partner, meanwhile, can be casually looking about the room much of the time. She has a lesser obligation to focus on her partner. (In a dance such as the tango, the convention calls for her spurningly to look away.)

It might be supposed that the male lead at least offers the advantage of self-expression by conferring a monopoly on the man to choreograph individual steps and decide where the couple will move. But even here the man is for the most part constrained by the necessity to replicate a given set of patterns. It is much more the role of the woman, when she is sent out into a turn in the waltz or let go of to dance alone in the mambo, to improvise. Between working out his patterns, avoiding collisions, concentrating his attitude on his partner, and providing physical support for her flourishes, the male leader proves to be an absorbed, even trapped, figure. He has been placed in charge, but has not seized power.

In contrast to the 60's model of ostentatious equality, if not androgyny, expressed by separate dancing, couples dancing enacts a complex mutuality between the sexes. Each partner accepts the constraints and enjoys the prerogatives of a frankly sex-stereotyped role. The woman accepts that she must follow, and for certain maneuvers she is physically supported by her partner. But she has the more desirable steps and a degree of freedom from care. The man, as the performer and teacher Paul Pellicoro admonishes, must "take care of the lady," that is, transmit his lead without either forcing or hesitation, ensure that her display movements will be graceful and attractive, not let her be bumped as she moves backward. His is a role of responsibility, as it was once universally believed to be his sexual role in life. Her role is to make it possible for him to lead and thereby help him provide her with pleasure, as it was once universally believed to be her sexual role in life.

ONE understands how the formality and fixed roles imposed by social dancing can have grated on the equalitarian sensibility of the 60's. But the casual and often unstable relationships that were entered into in the spirit of 60's-style dancing are perhaps themselves a sufficient comment on the advantages of sexually determined roles and constraints of the kind adumbrated in the social-dance partnership. Admittedly, it is always harder to return to structured relationships than it is to abandon them. But the partial revival of social dancing does seem to express a longing in such a direction—a longing, that is, to accept a role, determined by sex, according to which one expects to give one's partner a different order of pleasure from that which one receives. Reflecting such an arrangement as they do, the rules of social dance tap deeper sources and enjoy a greater authenticity than does the easy equality of separate dancing.

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Adultery, from Hawthorne to Updike

Carol Iannone

Surely ours is an age in which a work like Nathaniel Hawthorne's 19th-century masterpiece, *The Scarlet Letter*, could no longer be written. For one, obvious, thing, the story of a single act of adultery so severely consequential that it fatally transforms the lives of all it touches would be taken as something of a joke in an era that has witnessed open marriage and wife-swapping. But even more, this intricately wrought and exquisitely sorrowful tale of the beautiful Hester Prynne, unfaithful to her much older husband during his prolonged absence and punished by having to wear an embroidered scarlet "A" upon her breast; of her partner, the fervent and eloquent young minister Arthur Dimmesdale, nearly destroyed by the harrowing pangs of his conscience; of Pearl, the strangely "wild and flighty" child who is the product of their union; and of the husband Roger Chillingworth's slow, smoldering revenge—this story demands from author and reader alike an emotional sobriety, a moral consistency, and a sense of the inexorableness of individual accountability that must now seem quite remote.

Hawthorne draws Hester and Dimmesdale with the profoundest sympathy, and, projecting backward into the Puritan atmosphere of colonial New England, presents their deed as a pathos-filled attempt to flash some warmth and light into the frigid gloom of that world. Nevertheless, he not only insists on showing the disordered consequences of their actions, but makes clear that the very rigidity of the Calvinist ethos they face enables them to achieve a moral stature that would have been impossible in the "enlightened" age for which he himself wrote.

If that was true of Hawthorne's time, it is a hundred times truer of our own. With our lively, all-encompassing sense of absolute moral freedom, ours is an age in which *The Scarlet Letter* not only could not be written, but almost cannot even be read as Hawthorne wrote it. And sure enough, revisionist critics have taken this tale of transgression and regeneration and transformed it into an allegory of an oppressive culture pitted against rebellious and innocent victims.

Given these circumstances, it is a matter of exceptional interest that John Updike, himself an assiduous chronicler of contemporary American adultery, should have decided to write no fewer than three novels, the latest of which, *S.*,* has recently been published, as modern retellings of Hawthorne's classic. Updike's reworking of the Hawthorne material is loose, broad, inexact, and often thin, and his three novels do not display any continuity, comprehensiveness, or unity; they can certainly be read apart from one another and from their sketchy *Scarlet Letter* underpinning. But when they are read against it, a certain enriching chemistry occurs, even if Updike may not be in control of all the implications.

"What we did had a consecration of its own; we felt it so! We said so to each other," Hester Prynne passionately reminds Dimmesdale at one point in *The Scarlet Letter*. These words can send chills down the reader's spine, so blazingly bold and fiercely disobedient do they appear against the ponderous austerity of the Puritan theocracy that Hawthorne magnificently evokes. The idea of a "consecration" separate from social rules is Hawthorne's imaginative rendering of antinomianism, a heresy that shook the New England colony in the first half of the 17th century, some time before the action of his novel takes place, and according to which the individual claims access to an inner light that places him above or outside the authority of his society.

This dynamic operates in Updike's trilogy, too, although he is working in a wildly comic vein quite different from Hawthorne's sublimely elevated mode and more appropriate to our contemporary situation. Updike's characters, wandering from the beaten track in search of a kind of authenticity that eludes them in their ordinary middle-class lives, do not confront a steely orthodoxy that enforces, however painfully, a degree of self-discipline, but rather a confused, flabby, and permissive culture that lets them chronically flounder about.

Each of the three novels is based on one of the main adult characters from *The Scarlet Letter*. The first is the Dimmesdale version, *A Month of Sundays* (1974), set in the early 70's. Here we do indeed meet a brilliant but weak-willed Protestant minister struggling with sensuality and a flickering faith. Tom Marshfield disdains the lukewarm, soft-minded Protestantism of today, with its "milky human kindness," its "preposterous view of the church as an adjunct of religious studies and social service," its "safe and complacent faithlessness." Unlike Hawthorne's Dimmesdale, Marshfield is married, and to the daughter of one of his divinity-school professors (her name is Jane Chillingworth). While his marriage is not actively unhappy, it is somehow an expression of the tired, trapped emptiness of his life.

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With the sexual revolution burning about him, the anti-liberal Marshfield succumbs to the liberalization of sex, or what he translates as the "new work ethic of sufficient sex, sex as the exterior sign of interior grace, as the last sanctuary for violence, conquest, and rapture, in a world as docilely crammed as an elevator ascending after lunchtime." And not just sex, but adulterous sex. Even after his wife, chasing the spirit of the times, becomes "good in bed," Marshfield still seeks the thrill of illicit passion, and this becomes, comically, his bid for meaning and even his search for God. He writes a hilarious mock sermon in defense of the "sacrament of adultery":

> Wherein does the modern American man recover his sense of worth, not as dogged breadwinner and economic integer, but as romantic minister and phallic knight, as personage, embodiment, and hero? In adultery. And wherein does the American woman, coded into mindlessness by household slavery and the stupefying companionship of greedy infants, recover her powers of decision, of daring, of discrimination—her dignity in short? In adultery. The adulterous man and woman arrive at the place of their tryst stripped of all the false uniforms society has assigned against them; they come on no recommendation but their own, possess no credentials but those God bestowed, that is, insatiable egos and workable genitals. They meet in love, for love, with love; they tremble in a glory that is unpolluted by the wisdom of this world; they are, truly, children of the light.

As this quotation suggests, Marshfield is hardly completely fooled by his sexual antinomianism, but he does indulge in a couple of fairly serious entanglements plus a number of casual contacts with his female parishioners, who are released into his clerical arms by the "gale of female discontent" generated by feminism. When discovered, he is sent to a rest home for disturbed clergymen, a rising problem in the Aquarian age. There it is suggested that he write for therapy; his cracked, funny, often acute, sometimes touching reminiscences, memoirs, and observations, as well as the sermons he cannot help composing for each Sunday of the month of his stay, constitute the book.

Even as Marshfield dwells at length upon his sexual escapades, Updike manages to suggest the compelling delusiveness of the sexual revolution. Sex, dissolved from its place within the conjugal union and the procreative imperative, *must* become not only fun but "revelation"—a way of ordering the world, of discovering the self, of knowing another's soul, and so forth. A couple of scenes reveal the fear and desperation that operate behind the minister's increasingly frenzied weakness. When he visits his father, also a minister, but a distant, harsh, unloving man, the forty-one-year-old Marshfield murmurs in a tight quiet panic, "Daddy . . . I am your son. Something's gone wrong. I have no faith. Or rather, I have faith, but it doesn't seem to apply." And during an attempted session of lovemaking, suddenly impotent, he physically abuses the woman in an effort to get her to renounce the faith that she can feel and he cannot.

Still, all this is far, far removed from the remorseless pangs of conscience suffered by Hawthorne's Arthur Dimmesdale, a conscience pricked and goaded and inflamed even further by the malevolent Roger Chillingworth. As horrific as is Dimmesdale's torment, it does finally make possible his emergence from the madness of his secret guilt into a public confession that breaks the force of Chillingworth's evil influence and releases little Pearl from the "spell" that would surely have destroyed her life. Marshfield, by contrast, finds that despite all his transgressions as a man who "scorns his wife, betrays one mistress . . . exploits the trust and unhappiness of some who come to him for guidance, regards his father and his sons as menacing foreign objects," he can honestly feel "no distinct guilt."

At the end of his "cure," Tom Marshfield seems little improved, beyond being weakly ready to reshoulder the "ambiguity, rote performance, daily grits, hollow vows, stale gratifications, receding illusions" of his former life. But then, in a disturbing comic touch, on his day of departure he manages to seduce none other than the apparently safely and solidly asexual matron of the rest home, one Ms. Prynne herself. The final scene of the book relates their interlocking, Marshfield reaching out again for some authentic sense of himself.

Exactly how we are to take this development is not completely clear, and the ending of *A Month of Sundays* thus exposes something ultimately inconclusive about the book as a whole. It is as if Updike were glad to let the limitations of the first-person narrative relieve him of having to take a stand on the sexual revolution he feverishly dissects but cannot completely renounce, or as if he wanted to leave a door open to the antinomian idea of sex as a salvation, an idea which much of the book seems, if sometimes inadvertently, to undercut.

As it happens, the next entry in Updike's *Scarlet Letter* trilogy, *Roger's Version* (1986), gives greater insight into the problem of Updike's authorial hesitations. Like Hawthorne's Roger Chillingworth, Roger Lambert, fifty-two, is portrayed as a dry, bookish scholar, a professor of early Christian heresies comfortably ensconced in the divinity school of a large Boston university. Like Chillingworth, too, he has a cloudy past, if of a different and less insidious kind—he had to leave the ministry in a puff of scandal because of an affair with a younger woman, Esther, for whose sake he subsequently divorced his wife (suggesting a Tom Marshfield ten years later). He and Esther, age thirty-eight, now have one child and, again, a workable but stagnant marriage, made edgier by her boredom. Although Updike, with his comic temperament, is fairly incapable of drawing a truly evil character like Chillingworth, he does give Lambert a "dark side," a "sullen temper," an emotional aloofness and a capacity for occasional and even sustained meanness.

Who should now arrive on the scene but twenty-eight-year-old Dale Kohler, a fervent "Jesus freak," as Roger sees him, pos-

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sessed of a startling idea: "God is *breaking through.*" His creation, and His existence can now be *proved* through various scientific models and advanced computer technology. With Lambert's somewhat ambivalent help, Dale obtains a grant from the university to pursue his project of making God available to those who want to believe in the face of intellectual ridicule. Much of the book is taken up by long discussions between the two men, intriguing but too heavy for the novel's texture; in them, Lambert's elegant Barthianism—God as totally beyond all Tower-of-Babel attempts to know Him—is pitted against Dale's bold insistence that He is knowable, tangible in the here and now. In effect, the discussions also match the smugness and complacency of mainline Protestantism against the clumsy passion of the born-agains.

Yet despite his professions of a God resistant to human apprehension, and thus conveniently compatible with "worldly cynicism and situation ethics," Lambert shows himself susceptible to more intimate urgings. He admits that mixed with his disdain and, later, loathing for Dale is a "grateful inkling" for something that might healthfully disturb his own "stale and studious arrangements." When Dale enters into a sexual liaison with Esther (their couplings are described by Lambert, who functions as a sort of omniscient narrator, in the usual Updikean detail), the older man uses the relationship to irritate Dale's conscience, as Chillingworth did Dimmesdale's, preventing any open confession that might bring repentance and release to the increasingly confused young man. At the same time, Lambert himself becomes involved with his half-niece Verna and her illegitimate half-black child Paula, who live on welfare in a nearby housing project. Aside from the teasing thrill of incest and infidelity Verna affords, Roger's entanglement in the sordid details of her messed-up life becomes his implicit opportunity to descend from his ivory tower and put some Christianity into practice, along with his lust.

"Of course," this professor of heresies observes at one point, "the Church has always been recharged unorthodoxly. . . . If the salt lose its savor, wherewith indeed? Jesus himself, John the Baptist: ragged outsiders. Insiders tend to be villians." And what, after all, we are somehow reminded to ask, does the word Protestant actually mean? Truth to tell, however, the denizens of Updike's modern Protestant world are trapped in a religion they are too polite either to reject *or* to recharge. Next door to the Lamberts live Myron Kriegman and his wonderfully happy, pleasantly hedonistic, and totally secularized family. Here Updike sketches a comic inversion: instead of the usual stereotype of the Jew struggling with his covenant while the rest of the world dances heedlessly by, the Jews in *Roger's Version* dance—literally, doing aerobics on their porch—while the poor pinched Wasp is left wrestling the angel (albeit with only one hand, the other being wrapped around a drink).

BUT such signs of renewal as appear in *Roger's Version* turn out to be ambiguous. Some little stirrings do occur among the characters—some love, some warmth, some light—but they cannot be fully trusted. In the last scene, Esther has terminated her dead-end affair and is taking herself off to church for the first time in years; she claims, however, that she is doing so only to annoy her husband, whose mean streak seems to have survived the events of the novel. She and Lambert have also undertaken to care for Paula while Verna, protesting middle-class meaninglessness all the way, returns to her home in the Midwest to rebuild her life.

It is perhaps the most decent character, Dale, who fares the worst. The collapse of his affair leaves him personally disheveled, and as for his theories, they are demolished by Myron Kriegman at the Lamberts' annual spring cocktail party. Crestfallen, he too retreats to his native Midwest. We are reminded of Thomas Hooker, after whom the main building of the divinity school is named (Hooker Hall—a campus joke). Hooker was a "distinguished Puritan divine whose relatively liberal views upon baptismal efficacy and inward preparation for grace caused him to be exiled from Massachusetts into the wilderness of Connecticut." But what does this association imply? Are we to sympathize with Dale's effort to spark these dry bushes, or to rejoice that a bumbling antinomian has been prevented from disrupting the more orderly hierarchies of life?

It does not seem to matter, either way. Unlike in *The Scarlet Letter*, there are no weighty consequences in *Roger's Version*; no one is damned, but no one is saved, either. And so this book, absorbing and provocative on many levels, is also a terrific letdown. These manqué Protestants, struggling with a Puritan legacy in a no-fault culture, seeking salvation without admitting to sin, ask to be delivered from a sterile world but not at the price of surrendering what holds them to it. And Updike appears to be right in there with them. Although he has said that his novels are about "unsolvable dilemmas," the inconclusive quality of both *Roger's Version* and *A Month of Sundays* seems to have as much to do with his own aesthetic and moral timidity as with anything inherent in the "human condition."

HAPPILY, in *S.*, the last novel of the trilogy and the Hester Prynne version, Updike has made something of a breakthrough. Writing from a woman's perspective seems to have disciplined him. His long-held, unregenerate views about the separateness and specialness of femininity are here focused on the consequences in a woman's life of the free-fall search for meaning in a culture like ours, and the recognition that those consequences can be more momentous than for a man makes *S.* a harder and better book than the previous two.

Sarah Worth, forty-two, Boston Brahmin, descendant of hearty New England Puritans, suddenly abandons her "dark and unheeding" philandering physician husband Charles to join an ashram in the Arizona desert. The book is comprised of her enormously chatty and richly embroidered letters and tapes to Charles, to her daugh-

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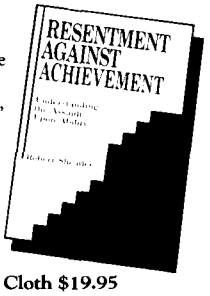

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ter Pearl, her mother, brother, psychiatrist, lawyer, yoga teacher, yoga partners, girlfriends, and assorted others. Through them we learn of her search for an enlightenment beyond the highly privileged but supposedly suffocating life she had led in the American upper middle class.

In its uproariously farcical description of the ashram, *S.* makes for a skewed and heightened retelling of yet another Hawthorne novel, *The Blithedale Romance*, a semi-comical, bittersweet account of the Brook Farm utopians of the 19th century. The "sanyassins" of Ashram Arhat are willingly worked and drugged into virtual mindlessness, then pushed and prodded in group-therapy sessions to release all inhibitions, sometimes in violent sex. The greedy fraudulence of this attempt to create a "thriving alternative to the atrocious way people live now" emerges hilariously through Sarah's all-observant and semi-credulous eyes. The leaders of the ashram preach nonattachment mainly because they would like to attach themselves to what their followers are shucking off. Their sweet, whimsical exhortations to reach the energy curled at the base of the spine give way in private to rather different assessments of their acolytes: "The snivelling shits. We're giving them the ride of their lives. No responsibility. No guilt. Just fucking and dancing and saying Om and watching God go by in a stretch limo."

Entering energetically into the spirit of the place, Sarah does seeem to attain some quiet joyful moments of inner renewal, although later she comes to suspect that these derive mostly from her mesmeric personal devotion to the resident guru, or "Master." With her still-level head and many skills she ascends the ashram hierarchy, deploying her flinty, hard-edged Yankee pragmatism, now packaged in a fluent vocabulary of unworldly Eastern mysticism, simultaneously to negotiate her divorce from Charles and to connive the ashram out of its rapidly accumulating financial troubles. Sarah can be wickedly dishonest and wildly self-deluded—eventually succumbing, for instance, to the esoteric byways of Eastern copulation with the guru—but she does learn. As the community rapidly begins to deteriorate, she even concedes that "all that bourgeois repression and watered-down Puritanism" which she sought to escape "has kept me fresh, you could say, in a way a lot of very charming and gifted and committed people here aren't, quite."

THE ashram is a source of broad satire in the novel, but it is soon clear that what has more seriously misled Sarah is another and less amusing form of antinomianism, namely, feminism. Anyone who thinks this is an easy target nowadays should consult the rather unfriendly reviews *S.* has garnered. Updike has been scored in particular for the supposedly simplistic and dated brand of feminism Sarah espouses—as if, for most women, feminism were a subject studied chapter and verse under the tutelage of serious cultural historians talmudically careful to receive and transmit the latest reasoned revisions of earlier obscurities. With Updike, it's a bit of female discontent, a vision of the "Judeo-Christian patriarchal trap," a glimpse of some "male avoidance maneuver," and Sarah is off and gushing. He has caught the tone exactly right—a little Gloria Steinem, a lot of Helen Gurley Brown.

In her letters Sarah loudly disdains her "22 years of respectable bondage and socially sanctioned frivolity," ponders regretfully the career she supposedly sacrificed for Charles's sake, and instructs her utterly recalcitrant daughter Pearl in the catechism of female independence and self-realization. It becomes obvious before long, though, that in fact she loved and still loves many aspects of her life as a suburban matron, wife, mother, mistress of two lovely homes, and busybody manager of her family's affairs. She also, more tellingly, becomes progressively disenchanted with possible alternative human arrangements. Although she regularly excoriates Charles for his emotional distance, she comes to feel that "communication . . . is hideously overrated,"and after living among the neurotically atten-

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tive women of the ashram she finds that she longs for the way a man "doesn't notice *any*thing." She likes, it seems, the "otherness" of being female and perhaps the right it confers *not* to be "equal." (She tells Charles early on, and it comes to have more significance later, that "though in some sense you were just another Boston-bred preppy brat not much older than I, in another you were my creator, you had put me here, in the rocky grassy seaside landscape" of their suburban Boston home. Perhaps this is why her letters to Charles, and to him alone, are signed "S.," indicating their special attachment.)

Amid her nonstop prattle, and the persistent distractions of her greed, selfishness, and envy, Sarah at length does arrive at an understanding of what she once had in her grasp, though she has now put herself once and for all beyond its reach. As for her search for enlightenment, for the Eight-Fold Way, while she can perhaps claim to have gained some shards of illumination, and a "wholly new vocabulary to frame the perennial problems in," at the end Sarah confesses that she is not quite brave enough for the real thing, "never able to let go chittavrittis" (eddies and fluctuations of consciousness) because she is "afraid of the void beneath them."

Actually, however, this is meant to be less an admission of defeat on Sarah's part than a brave assertion. She could be voicing Updike's own credo as an artist when she rhapsodizes:

> For what is life, this illusion which we live and wish to sustain, but this very same skin of fluctuating awareness, of unsteady and no doubt unworthy nibbles and glimmers and halted thoughts and half-sensations? Isn't this, this thin impalpable skin of color and flicker, this and only this the ecstasy of existence that we wish to prolong forever. . . . For yes, we do wish to live entirely in our chittavrittis yet cheat them by hoping they are not all there is, and any demonstration we can make of our ideality . . . flatters this hope.

From this single suggestive passage one can derive Updike's programmatic addiction as a writer to the nuances and delicacies of the actual, the present, the palpable, the physical, the sexual, the sexual, the sexual. And in it, too, one sees evidence of his own continual negotiation for an "ideal" which eludes him as it does his characters. Updike has said that "the artist is in some way a middleman between the ideal world and this," and he has quoted Hawthorne's view of the territory of art as "where the Actual and the Imaginary might meet." His dementedly detailed and wetly graphic sexual scenes are themselves intended as an attempt to unite the two spheres, to find the transcendent in the temporal, or the "sacerdotal in the scrotal," as Tom Marshfield puts it. But what Sarah feels about the "terrible underlying stillness" of the ultimate contemplative state, namely, that it is for her "indistinguishable from death," points as well to the limitations of this stance, with its brittle courtship of and simultaneous resistance to surrender. Dimmesdale dying on the scaffold, yielding his sinful self to the mercy of God, Hester choosing to wear her letter again years after his death, taking up her cross, as it were, and turning it into a badge of spiritual triumph—for Updike, such quintessentially Christian acts would seem to entail an intolerable loss of the world he knows for a world he simply is not sure of.

Still, Updike's ability to present the struggle so vividly makes *S.* a more canny and courageous book than the previous two in his *Scarlet Letter* trilogy. And the trilogy as a whole, for all its hesitations and compromising ambiguities, is to be welcomed not just for its many local artistic triumphs but for the hard question it puts—questions of renewal, of grace, of authenticity, of salvation—to a culture "founded," as Sarah phrases it, "on the edge of a dream."

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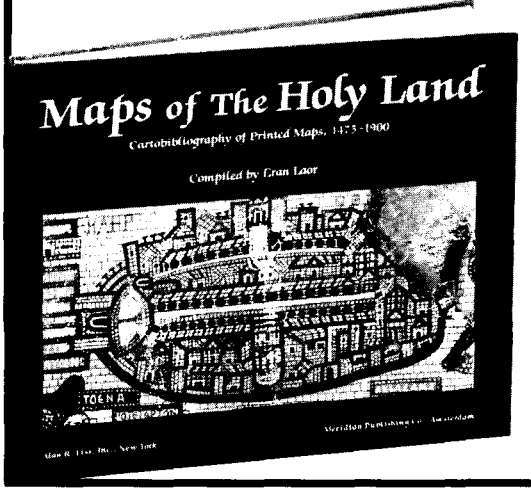

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IPS

COVERT CADRE: INSIDE THE INSTITUTE FOR POLICY STUDIES. By S. STEVEN POWELL. *Green Hill Publishers. 469 pp. $29.95.*

Reviewed by JOSHUA MURAVCHIK

THE chief issues adviser to Reverend Jesse Jackson's presidential campaign this year was Robert Borosage, for the past decade the executive director of the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS). At the Democratic national convention Jackson was anointed as the "conscience" of the party, and it is apparently Borosage who to a large extent formulates the content of that conscience. If Michael Dukakis becomes President of the United States, it is safe to assume that Borosage or others chosen by him will be among those appointed to important positions.

This is a rather handsome new feather in the cap of IPS, which was already well plumed. George McGovern, the 1972 Democratic presidential nominee, is now ensconced as a fellow at IPS, and the other former Democratic Senator from South Dakota, James Abourezk, serves on the institute's board. So does Paul Warnke, America's chief arms-control negotiator during Jimmy Carter's presidency, and so too does William Winpisinger, the president of one of this country's largest labor unions. In addition, IPS runs something called the Washington School at which a long list of former Carter-administration officials—including Stuart Eizenstat, Anthony Lake, Patricia Derian, and Matthew Nimetz—have taught, as have Senator Mark Hatfield, former Senator Paul Tsongas, a slew of Congressmen, and a number of reporters for the Washington *Post*. Indeed, one of IPS's more impressive accomplishments consists of the ties it has built to the mass media, especially the *Post*, several of whose reporters have at various times served as IPS associates.

Other individuals have gone back and forth between posts at IPS and on congressional staffs. IPS maintains a network on Capitol Hill of friendly legislators and aides, and much of its program aims at influencing a still wider circle on the Hill. Every year or two, IPS publishes an "alternative" federal budget, the gist of which is to take the funds the government now spends on fighting Communism abroad and use them instead to build what can best be described as socialism at home. This budget is invariably accompanied by a preface signed by some fifty to sixty Congressmen.

THOUGH IPS has no official line or political position, it describes itself as "radical," and though there is some variation in opinion among its officers and fellows, there is a rough common denominator that unites them all.

To begin with, they seem to prefer socialism in some sense to capitalism. Second, within the realm of "socialism," they prefer Lenin's heritage to Karl Kautsky's. Rarely in IPS's corpus does one encounter friendly treatment of the latter's social-democratic progeny. In contrast, IPS literature abounds in praise of Ho and Mao and Fidel and the Sandinistas, not to mention all manner of still more obscure Leninists like Angola's ruling MPLA, the People's Front for the Liberation of Oman, the governments of Mozambique, Laos, and even Somalia—at least until a decade ago when Somalia's enemy, Ethiopia, joined the Soviet camp and propelled Somalian strongman Siad Barre toward the West. ("We in our country have much to learn [from] . . . Siad's thought and that of his fellow revolutionaries in Somalia," declared one British-based IPS publication before Siad's turn.)

On the other hand, this admiration for Communist governments does not usually extend to the Soviet Union. One exception was a comment made by IPS fellow Saul Landau (as reported in the *Wall Street Journal* in 1982) that "the Soviet Union has been the one insurance policy of successful revolutions." But even here the Soviet Union is praised less for the quality of its own institutions than for its role as bulwark of Third World Communist movements. Typical of the IPS view is the comment Borosage made to me in an interview in 1980 that paired the United States and the Soviet Union as two countries with "systems that lead to dead ends." However, the Soviet Union, according to Borosage, had spawned a "whole range" of "interesting social experiments" like "Yugoslavia, Hungary, Poland, Cuba, and Nicaragua."

This attitude toward the Soviet Union would seem to differ from that of the current president of IPS, Peter Weiss. An attorney, Weiss has been active in the National Lawyers Guild, the American affiliate of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, a barely camouflaged Soviet-front organization whose own president has received the Lenin Peace Prize. Weiss is also an officer of the Center for Constitutional Rights, a grouping of leftist lawyers which includes former National Lawyers Guild president Michael Ratner, as well as such other far-Left legal luminaries as William Kunstler and Arthur Kinoy.

Nor is Weiss's wife Cora—who runs the Rubin Foundation, from which the bulk of IPS's budget comes—noted for being critical of the Soviet Union. In fact, in one IPS publication she complains that "anti-Soviet Communism" (not merely anti-Communism) is "a hereditary disease transmitted over the past sixty years."

The fact that IPS has become so successful despite its radical views was bound to invite scrutiny. In 1980, the best-selling novel *The*

JOSHUA MURAVCHIK *is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute. He contributed "'Glasnost,' the KGB, and the 'Nation'" to our June issue.*

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Robert Alter is professor of Hebrew and Comparative Literature at the University of California at Berkeley. His many books include *Partial Magic: The Novel as a Self-Conscious Genre; Modern Hebrew Literature*; and *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, for which he received the National Book Award for Jewish Thought in 1982.

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Spike by Arnaud de Borchgrave and Robert Moss depicted a group obviously patterned on IPS as the nerve center of KGB influence on the American media. Then a groundbreaking article in *Midstream* by Rael Jean Isaac, a series in the New York *Post* by Michael Novak, some articles in *Barron's* by John Boland, and one by me in the New York *Times Magazine* brought IPS some additional critical attention. These writings were greeted by howls of "McCarthyism" on the Left, while simultaneously whetting the curiosity of the Left's opponents for a fuller accounting of IPS's history and activities.

Covert Cadre: Inside the Institute for Policy Studies by S. Steven Powell is the first book-length attempt to satisfy that curiosity. It, too, is sure to be labeled "McCarthyite" by the Left, which uses that term, and wants others to use it, merely as a synonym for "anti-Communist." In this, the Left is at one with the late Senator himself, who wrote a book titled *McCarthyism: The Fight for America.* But it was not for his anti-Communism that McCarthy was censured by the Senate and condemned in the court of public opinion, and in fact many of those who led the fight against him argued that he was a liability to the cause of anti-Communism. What made "McCarthyism" a justifiable term of obloquy were the intellectually scurrilous methods for which the Senator became famous.

Unfortunately, Powell's book, while providing by far the single most compendious collection of facts about IPS that anyone has yet compiled, is guilty of using some of these scurrilous methods.

For example, Powell at times imputes guilt by association. Thus: former ambassador Sol Linowitz chaired a commission that made recommendations for U.S. policy toward Latin America just on the eve of the Carter presidency. A parallel report was issued by an IPS task force whose membership overlapped to some degree with that of the Linowitz commission. Because Linowitz and several of his associates subsequently served in influential capacities in the administration, a question arises about the extent of IPS influence. In order to magnify this question, Powell, on the strength of a snippet of a quotation from one of Zbigniew Brzezinski's books, refers to the "Brzezinski-Linowitz approach" and the "Brzezinski-Linowitz philosophy." Yet the truth is that Brzezinski and Linowitz are at the opposite poles of the Democratic-party spectrum of opinion about policy toward Latin America.

Again, trying to impress his readers with the extent of IPS influence, Powell mentions the importance to Capitol Hill staff of the Library of Congress's Congressional Research Service (CRS). He then says: "And CRS in turn uses IPS publications for its source material." Powell offers two pieces of evidence for this startling revelation. First, that according to one CRS staff member he interviewed, the director of the service and an aide "introduced to CRS several papers on Cuba by IPS associate William LeoGrande, papers which favorably portrayed Castro and Cuban life."

On the face of it, all this means is that someone on the CRS staff was told to read, or perhaps merely to file, some of LeoGrande's publications. But since LeoGrande is a recognized authority in the field of Latin American studies, it would be surprising if CRS researchers did not read his writings, whatever his views. Powell offers not even a suggestion that this particular incident reflected itself in any of CRS's voluminous output.

For his second exhibit, Powell says that "Stanley Higinbotham," chief of the foreign-affairs and national-defense division of CRS, "collaborated with Joe Eldridge of WOLA [the Washington Office on Latin America]." WOLA plays a leading part in what the *New Republic*'s Fred Barnes calls "the Sandinista lobby," and Powell presents some interesting evidence to show that it is pro-Castro as well. But his evidence of "collaboration" consists entirely of a single letter from "Higinbotham"—whose name actually is Heginbotham—to Eldridge asking for his ideas about drawing up categories of human-rights violations. Powell says nothing about how many other people Heginbotham put this question to, what use he made of Eldridge's reply, or even whether Eldridge replied at all. In my own research on human rights I have encountered some of Heginbotham's work and found it the very soul of ideological neutrality, as one would expect from CRS.

Powell also makes exaggerated accusations. He twice refers to the late Samuel Rubin, the father of Cora Weiss and the founder of the fortune by which IPS is now largely supported, as "a registered member of the Communist party." But the evidence on which Powell bases this charge is a record of the New York City registration roll of the 1930's that shows Rubin to have been a registered Communist-party *voter*—suggestive evidence, to be sure, but not conclusive in proving that Rubin was a member in the sense of being under party discipline.

Elsewhere Powell asserts that "the mass demonstrations against the Vietnam war [were] largely organized by Communist party members," a doubtful claim for which in any event he offers no evidence.

Powell, again like McCarthy, sometimes relies on innuendo. In a section under the heading "None Dares Call it Treason," he writes: "It is, of course, possible that the high degree of correlation between Soviet and IPS objectives is merely coincidental." The reader is, I suppose, expected to snicker. But the question is not whether there is "coincidence." The real question is whether IPS acts at the behest of an enemy power, which would indeed be treason, or whether it acts out of its own sympathies for Communist movements, which may be morally and intellectually reprehensible, but is not against the law.

Yet another McCarthy-like technique to which Powell resorts is to misrepresent documents. For instance, he criticizes a 1979 feature story on Cuba by Peter Osnos in the Washington *Post* of which he says: "Despite Cuba's economic dependence on Moscow . . . Osnos could find little evidence of Soviet

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influence. . . ." Yet here is what Osnos wrote: "For all its distinctive features, Cuba is still very much like other countries in the Soviet bloc. Indeed, on some important points of style, the Cuban way seems more Soviet than that of some of Moscow's closer neighbors." After elaborating on this point for seven or eight paragraphs, Osnos added: "Official Cubans make no apologies for their closeness to the Soviet Union. . . . The Kremlin, everyone acknowledges, is paying increasingly massive subsidies . . . without which Cuba would be in desperate straits." And there is more in this vein.

BUT for me, Powell's most irritating flaw is his use of sources. On some occasions he gives no source at all, and at numerous other points, he puts in footnotes which turn out to be empty. For example, he offers a damning quotation from nuclear-freeze leader Randall Forsberg calling for out-and-out collaboration between the American peace movement and the Soviet government. Powell says that she spoke these words at one of the IPS-sponsored arms-control meetings with Soviet representatives held in Minneapolis, but the footnote here reads simply: "Randall Forsberg, statement, Minneapolis, May 25, 1983." The reader gets not a clue as to whether there is a transcript, whether the words were recorded, or whether Powell himself was present—whether, in short, there is anything to verify the quotation.

In various other places, Powell uses anonymous sources, undated news clippings, secondary sources whose objectivity would not be accepted by those not predisposed to believe his case, and a string of references to an apparently purloined batch of the correspondence of Joseph Eldridge, the head of WOLA, without any indication of how this came into Powell's hands.

These methods are offensive in themselves. They also undermine confidence in Powell's book, which does indeed, as I have already indicated, contain some interesting new information about IPS. Thus he reports that Gareth Porter, the leading American apologist for Pol Pot during the Cambodia genocide, now is employed as an aide to Senator John Kerry. Nor did I know that Julia Preston, a Washington *Post* correspondent in Central America since early 1986, worked previously for Pacific News Service, an IPS spin-off, and for the North American Congress on Latin America, a group in unabashed solidarity with Latin America's Communist guerrillas. Powell also adds some good quotations to the storehouse revealing the true colors of his subjects, such as this from the Reverend William Sloane Coffin: "I think that communism is a page torn out of the Bible. . . ." Alas, the source is weak—an interview in the Columbia College *Spectator*.

POWELL is fixated on the question of whether IPS is secretly financed

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or run by the Soviet or Cuban governments. His book is replete with photos of and textual references to Soviet-embassy officials attending IPS meetings. Yet neither he nor I nor any of the other writers who have treated with IPS has been able to substantiate that suspicion. Nor is it necessary to do so in order to discredit IPS.

For IPS deserves discredit in its own right and on its own terms. It deserves discredit, first, because of the apologies and even applause that it furnishes to so many of the world's cruelest regimes. Secondly, it deserves discredit because its own intellectual method is dishonest. IPS fellows talk among themselves about "the 'S' word," meaning socialism. This is a jocular way of acknowledging to each other that they believe in something that they are unwilling to espouse openly. (And "socialism" itself is something of a euphemism for the regimes with which IPS identifies.)

Finally, IPS deserves discredit because its work is harmful to our country and the whole democratic world. Powell seems to fear that IPS may actually succeed in bringing socialism to America. But it is doubtful that the leaders of IPS seriously entertain any such hope. Instead, they aim to persuade America not to resist Communist expansion abroad, knowing that this will facilitate the triumph of the "progressive camp." As IPS founder Richard Barnet put it in his book, *Intervention and Revolution*, "the first imperative is that the world must be made safe for revolution." The "revolutions" that IPS admires are all virulently anti-American and the revolutionaries virtually all ally themselves with America's most deadly enemy. Making the world safe for them means making it a lot less safe for America in particular and the democratic cause in general.

IPS is and should continue to be free to express its views, but it is morally scandalous that Senators, Congressmen, labor leaders, and major journalists should be encouraging or participating in the legitimation and the spread of those views.

It is a pity that Powell did not restrict himself to developing some such point as this instead of relying on dubious methods to prove a charge for which the evidence is less than conclusive.

Oracles of Feminism

THE SISTERHOOD: THE TRUE STORY OF THE WOMEN WHO CHANGED THE WORLD. By MARCIA COHEN. *Simon & Schuster. 445 pp. $19.95.*

Reviewed by THOMAS J. MAIN

ALTHOUGH at first blush *The Sisterhood* looks like a semi-scholarly history of American feminism in the 60's and 70's, the reader quickly discovers that it is something else. That "something" is suggested by Marcia Cohen's prose style, which will be quite familiar to readers of *Good Housekeeping*, *McCall's*, and *Ladies' Home Journal* (to the last of which she has contributed). Organized around brief biographies of four of "the major oracles of the Golden Age of Feminism"—Betty Friedan, Kate Millett, Germaine Greer, and Gloria Steinem—the book focuses in good part on these women's looks, their taste in dress and lovers, and the scandals they were involved in. A better subtitle for it might thus have been "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous and Politically Correct."

Yet despite these qualities, or oddly enough because of them, *The Sisterhood* is a very illuminating work. Who could object to Cohen's frequent praise of Gloria Steinem's long legs, on the one hand, or her many disparaging descriptions of Betty Friedan's physical attributes, on the other, when it turns out that the sex-appeal gap between the two women had as much to do with precipitating their political split as any ideological differences? Who could complain about the detailed accounts of boyfriends, girlfriends, and bedrooms when a premise of the feminist movement at this point in its history was (as a feminist not cited here once put it), "nothing is more political than orgasms"? And although Germaine Greer has denounced this book's portrait of her "shabby, shaggy, half-naked, and braless self," Greer's own description of a photograph that she chose to appear in the first issue of her magazine, *Suck*, is not exactly an improvement: "I just lay on my back on the floor of the studio and put my knees over my head. It was shot from there. So that all you can see is legs, a huge bottom, like a great apple, a cunt, an anus and a face. . . ."

In the manner of the celebrity journalist that she essentially is, Marcia Cohen tends to give disproportionate attention to a few events in the annals of the feminist movement because of their drama and novelty, and to neglect the historical context that made these events possible. Here, too, however, her approach succeeds in spite of itself, for the incidents she highlights are often both exceedingly bizarre and symptomatic. Consider, for example, the life and loves of Ti-Grace Atkinson, the first president of the New York chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW). That Atkinson was a defender of Valerie Solanis, the author of the SCUM [Society for Cutting Up Men] Manifesto and attempted murderer of Andy Warhol, is fairly well known. In *The Sisterhood*, we also learn about Atkinson's fondness for the Mafia—"They hated the police as much as I did"—and her relationship with the mobster Joe Colombo, whom she eulogized as follows after he was gunned down: "This STRANGE and BEAUTIFUL and REVOLUTIONARY FOOL and 'criminal'—Joseph Colombo—wore a 'Freedom for Women' button in front of the press and the FBI and nobody dared laugh." It seems not to have occurred to Atkinson that Colombo could have worn a button with the device "Votes for Lobsters" and nobody would have dared to laugh.

There are several other such strange and fascinating tidbits reported here. The question they all raise is why the approach Cohen has taken to her subject—an ap-

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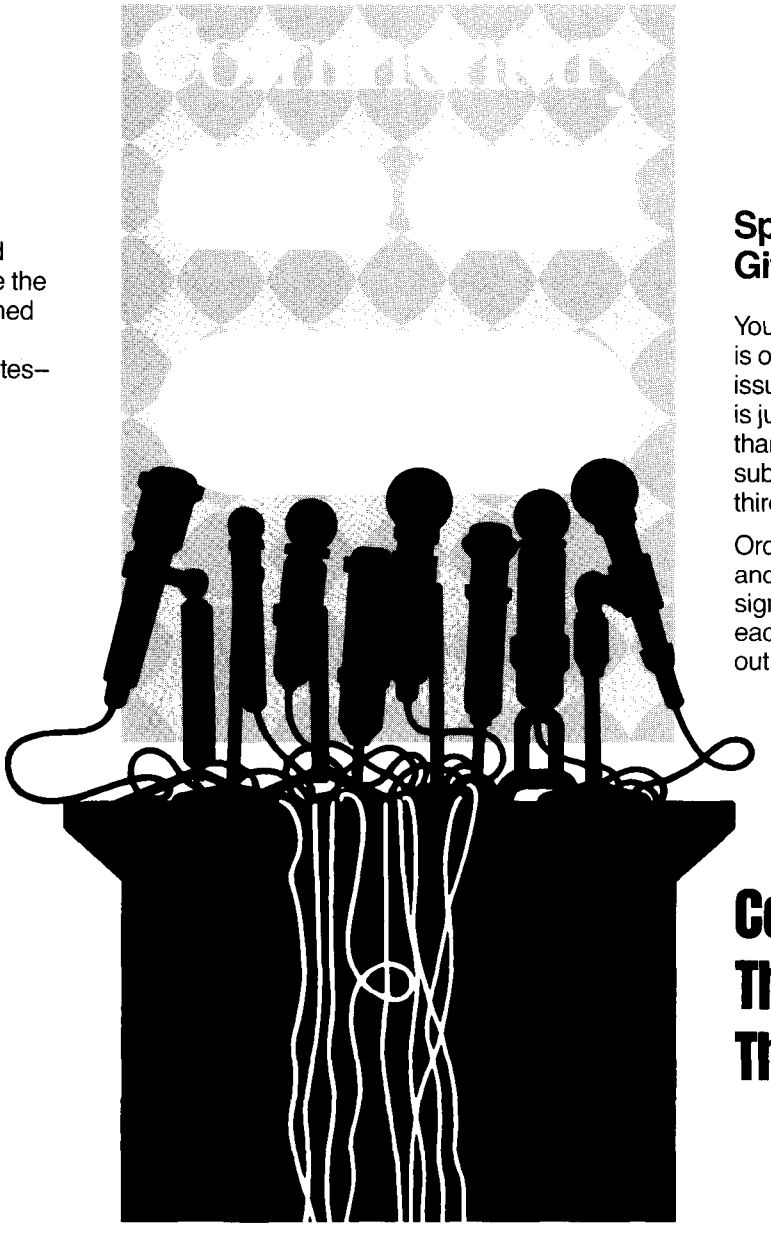

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Commentary. The Thoughts That Count.

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proach that amounts to the mere retailing of gossip—should seem somehow so appropriate. And the answer is that the feminists themselves legitimized this approach with their famous insistence that "the personal is political."

THIS slogan, and variations on it, arises repeatedly in Cohen's accounts of feminist writing and debates. What the feminists of the 60's and 70's meant by it, however, is not immediately clear. One construction of the idea might be that in the end, our knowledge of our political environment derives from our experiences, which are therefore our ultimate standard for analysis and guide to change. The problem with this interpretation is that it renders the concept plausible only by reducing it to a truism. Moreover, although the politics of militant blacks, say, or of union organizers, may be rooted in the experience of racism and/or exploitation, the movements to which those experiences gave birth are hardly "personal." Nor are the personal lives of political leaders normally viewed as central to the public issues they address. Only feminists voluntarily put their own dirty laundry out for inspection.

What, then, is the meaning and appeal of this slogan for feminists? When the feminists of the period covered by *The Sisterhood* referred to "the personal," what they had in mind was something less than the sum total of one's experiences. What was meant was one's sex life, plus the more awkward details of one's emotional condition. They claimed an indissoluble link between bedroom practices and deepest emotions on the one hand, and ideology and policy preferences on the other.

This was a tactic that recommended itself for two reasons. First, since even the more "moderate" feminist reforms concerned such matters as abortion, birth control, and divorce law, it was essential to win acceptance of such matters as legitimate subjects of public debate if the movement were to go anywhere. This seems to have been the main intellectual point that NOW was trying to gain in the mid-60's, and here it was successful. But then, owing to a number of factors, not least of which was simple intellectual laziness, a second factor came quickly into play: it was discovered that opposition to feminist ideas could be disarmed if the feminist case were put in the most sexually graphic, emotionally distraught, and generally coarse manner possible. This too proved successful.

Marcia Cohen quotes a professor of Kate Millett's as saying that reading her book *Sexual Politics* was "like sitting with your testicles in a nutcracker." The remark is perhaps unfair to that particular book, which is among the more reasoned of feminist polemics, but it is not unfair to the genre as a whole. Here is Robin Morgan: "Let it all hang out. Let it seem bitchy, catty, dykey, frustrated, crazy, Sloanesque, nutty, frigid, ridiculous, bitter, embarrassing, manhating, libelous, pure, unfair, envious, intuitive, low-down, stupid, petty, liberating." Few serious people of either sex were willing to conduct a discussion in such terms (Norman Mailer, never known for his own rhetorical restraint, was one of the few), and in quitting the field they gave the impression of having been refuted.

Even when feminist discourse was not nearly so raw, there was a tendency to forestall objections by implying that one's deepest and most private feelings were at stake. Gloria Steinem, for example, once wrote an article about her mother, entitled "Ruth's Song," which was meant to be a portrait of oppressed womanhood. Her mother, Steinem tells us, "was defeated by a biased world. . . . Her fate is not uncommon for women." Of this article, written in an incantatory, James Agee-like style, Cohen observes that it is ". . . laced with a gentle shower of detail, of heartbreaking incidents." The only problem is that, assuming the article's accuracy, Ruth Steinem was obviously a mentally ill person, a fact which her daughter nowhere acknowledges and indeed has explicitly denied in an interview with Cohen. But who would be willing to tell the editor of *Ms.* that she was wrong about her own mother? In this way did the personal come to do the work of the political.

Still, whatever advantages feminists achieved through their deployment of this technique, historically it must also be seen as a major factor in the failure of the feminist movement to produce serious intellectual spokesmen. In particular, the public flaunting of one's private life as a means of "subverting" bourgeois discourse has proved much easier to harness for commercial purposes than anyone in the late 60's would have believed. Once "bitchy, catty, . . . petty," became a legitimate mode of expression, the result was not a new feminist language but *Donahue* and *People* magazine.

Germaine Greer claims that she chose the photograph described above, rather than a more modest topless shot, because the latter could easily have been published in the tabloids. Today, one wonders whether many publishers would draw the line so chivalrously. Cohen herself notices that the feminist movement made its greatest impact on the public just as celebrity journalism and plain gossip were achieving a previously unheard of legitimacy—as the Marxists say, this is surely no accident. Although the particular figures discussed in *The Sisterhood* may not have intended it, consciousness-raising easily translated into revenue-raising.

WHATEVER may be said for (or against) the social and demographic changes wrought by feminism, the consequences of all this for the intellectual side of the movement have been plain. Feminist writing today falls into two categories. First are writers like Friedan and Steinem, who have never managed to rise above journalism. Then there is feminist scholarship, published in journals like *Signs* and of no interest for the most part to anyone but other academic feminists. Missing altogether are intellectuals who express their thoughts in the language developed by generations of political thinkers and actors, and whose frame of reference is the history of democratic institutions, their progress and their failings. That the feminist movement is devoid of such figures perhaps helps to explain why its history is so easily captured in gossip.

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The KGB

CHEKISTY: A HISTORY OF THE KGB. By JOHN J. DZIAK. *Lexington Books. 169 pp. $17.95.*

ON THE WRONG SIDE: MY LIFE IN THE KGB. By STANISLAV LEVCHENKO. *Pergamon-Brassey. 244 pp. $18.75.*

SECRET SERVANT: MY LIFE WITH THE KGB AND THE SOVIET ELITE. By ILYA DZHIRKVELOV. *Harper & Row. 386 pp. $22.50.*

Reviewed by MICHAEL LEDEEN

For many years, books about the KGB were relatively rare. Now all of a sudden we are waist-deep in them, and many are quite good. The three under review here, one a scholarly work and the other two memoirs of former KGB officers, offer a representative sampling.

In *Chekisty*, a fascinating and important book, John J. Dziak, a full-time employee of the Defense Intelligence Agency who also teaches at both Georgetown and George Washington University, looks at the USSR through the window of the KGB, or Cheka, MVD, NKVD, GPU, or OGPU (to use some of the other names by which this agency and its various components have been known over the past seventy-one years). Dziak contends, indeed, that we can best understand the Soviet Union itself as a "counter-intelligence state," by which he means that, since the first days of the revolution, Lenin and his sucessors have devoted their maximum efforts to deceiving, neutralizing, and destroying (physically or politically) their opponents, whether within the Soviet empire or elsewhere.

Dziak argues his case convincingly, citing a series of specific examples—some known, others new, at least outside the classified literature—that illuminate the history and current practice of the USSR and its surrogates (Cuba, Ethiopia, Nicaragua, Vietnam). In Dziak's approach, the deliberate starvation of the Ukrainian peasantry during the first great wave of Red Terror after Lenin's seizure of power is seen as a model for Mengistu's Ethiopia today—and for the Red Army's strategy against the Afghan resistance.

Dziak shows how Soviet campaigns against external opponents are almost always accompanied and paralleled by waves of internal repression. Except for brief periods when Soviet dictators created special agencies for such purposes, this internal repression has been carried out by the "organs of state security." As with so many features of the Soviet system, the history and eventual fate of these "organs" are intimately connected with Joseph Stalin. For it was Stalin who removed the KGB from its classical position as the cutting edge of the Communist party, and turned it into an instrument of his personal power. As such, however, it became a two-edged sword; in the end, Dziak argues persuasively, this was the same instrument that was used by Lavrenty Beria to challenge Stalin's control and advance his own cause. Under Beria, indeed, the KGB was to reach its maximum prestige, although this too was a relatively short-lived phenomenon; in but a few years Khrushchev outmaneuvered Beria and initiated one of those spasms of "reform" that seem to occur two or three times a century in Russia.

The Khrushchev period of "de-Stalinization" was a bad one for the KGB, but after Khrushchev's removal the agency soon recovered, and then some. Today, as Dziak reminds us, despite Gorbachev's promises of reform, the KGB is politically more powerful than ever before. In 1961, the "organs of state security" (KGB plus MVD) sent twelve delegates to the 22nd Soviet Communist party congress; in 1986, under the banner of *glasnost*, there were 35 representatives of the KGB and MVD at the 27th congress of the CPSU. For anyone interested in the question of whether and to what extent Gorbachev is producing real change in the Soviet system, here is one useful yardstick.

VIRTUALLY without exception, defectors from the KGB who seek asylum in the United States are astonished to discover the modest income and middling style of life among top officials of the American intelligence community. Many are psychologically unprepared for their sudden passage from high status to anonymity, and equally unprepared for the idea that they will have to work for a living in a free-market economy. This helps to explain why so many defectors pass through a period of profound crisis, in which they ponder the possibility of returning to the USSR even though it is likely they would be met there with a death sentence.

Stanislav Levchenko, however, is an exception. Perhaps because he spent many years working for the KGB in Japan, he has taken easily and naturally to life in the U.S.

In *On the Wrong Side*, Levchenko underlines the methods and the issues that drive today's KGB: disinformation, the use of the media as both a cover and a source of valuable intelligence, and the heavy concentration on scientific and technological information to help keep the failed Soviet system afloat. On the personal side, he also reminds us that the KGB does take vengeance against the families of defectors. Levchenko himself, for example, thought that his wife and son would not be singled out for punishment after his departure, but in fact they were; his son was made a pariah, and eventually developed severe digestive problems, while his wife was so ostracized that she came to feel like "a grain of sand," subject to any passing wind, tide—or foot. In sharing such moments with the reader, Levchenko goes far to confirm the sober analytical portrait of the KGB advanced in John Dziak's *Chekisty*.

IF Stanislav Levchenko regards himself as being at war with the KGB, Ilya Dzhirkvelov is a different case entirely, one who seemingly cannot even bring himself to dislike his old institution. Indeed, on many occasions in *Secret Servant* Dzhirkvelov takes pains to shift the blame for egregious Soviet actions away from the KGB entirely, for example by attributing the management of disinformation to the Communist party.

MICHAEL LEDEEN's *new book,* Perilous Statecraft, *has just been published by Scribner's.*

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Dzhirkvelov also defends the Soviet Union itself from its critics, though sometimes the exercise leads him into all but incredible rationalizations. Thus, on a single page he first tells us that every morning Leonid Zamyatin (head of the Communist party's International Information Department) instructs the editors of the various Soviet newspapers and magazines (as well as the TASS and Novosti press agencies) what they are to report, "and which events they were *not* to report if they revealed the Soviet government in a bad light," and then further down on the same page claims that "this was not censorship, but political and ideological guidance. Articles and news items dealing with events abroad are not subject to any censorship. But if there are any doubts about the facts and their interpretation the matter is cleared up in consultation. . . ."

Unlike Levchenko, who had a yearning for freedom, Dzhirkvelov defected purely and simply because his career had been placed in jeopardy by bad relations with a superior. This, indeed, may have something to do with his apparent readiness to slant things in favor of his former comrades, to the point where one sometimes wonders how clean a break he has made. Certainly his exposé is a limited one, and unlikely to incur the ire of the current masters of the KGB—a circumstance that suggests how, even after leaving the KGB, one can remain a creature of the "counter-intelligence state."

Of the three books, Dzhirkvelov's is probably the most representative of the rank-and-file KGB officer, who, although perhaps concerned about the morality of some of the actions of the "organs of state security," is not troubled by the system he defends. Dzhirkvelov's arrival in the West was a personal affair, not a political choice. Levchenko's autobiographical reflections are quite a different matter, for Levchenko made a fundamental decision to leave the Soviet bloc and join forces with the West. The differences between the two can be seen in their behavior on this side of the Iron Curtain: Dzhirkvelov lives quietly in England, while Levchenko works actively with the United States government to understand—and thwart—his former comrades in the KGB. In their different ways, however, both Levchenko and Dzhirkvelov confirm and enrich John J. Dziak's analysis of the Soviet Union as a counter-intelligence state, an analysis that is particularly relevant now that so many people seem to believe that the Communist era has already passed into history, and that the only remaining question is how long we need wait for the Soviet Union's full democratization.

Theatrics

A LIFE. By ELIA KAZAN. *Knopf. 864 pp. $24.95.*

Reviewed by HERB GREER

ELIA Kazan's claim to attention is based mostly on his part in a few decades of American entertainment. In the 30's he was a member of the Group Theater, which he left to become a well-known director on Broadway. Between the mid-40's and the early 60's he was associated with the Actors' Studio and with some highly praised American playwrights, including Thornton Wilder, Clifford Odets, Arthur Miller, and Tennessee Williams. He worked in Hollywood in the last years of the studio system directing a number of films, a few of which exploited "serious" themes, including polite anti-Semitism among middle-class Americans (*Gentleman's Agreement*), the spoiling of innocence by success (*A Face in the Crowd*), and union corruption among New York dock workers (*On the Waterfront*). Later he turned to writing novels on various topics of suburban *angst*.

In the midst of this modest career, in 1952, an accident of politics gave Kazan's reputation a tinge of notoriety. He had earlier become attached to what he calls "the movement": ". . . the surge of hope and confidence and determination that took over from the Great Depression, the anti-monopoly-capital movement, the anti-colonialist movement of the 30's and 40's."

In the cases of Kazan and several of his friends this meant membership in an active Communist cell, whose objective was to indoctrinate the American people and use the New York theater as an instrument of Soviet foreign policy. This quixotic chore was later extended by certain writers and directors to Hollywood.

Kazan, unusually gifted with common sense (a rare quality in his profession at any time), soon left the party and its artistic minelaying to his sillier colleagues. But when, in the early 50's, Congress became alarmed by these people and their sympathizers, a number of them, including Kazan, were summoned by the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) to testify and "name names" of left-wing activists and fellow-travelers. Refusal meant blacklisting and career damage, which Kazan was not prepared to accept. He became one of the "friendly witnesses," and his left-wing friends damned him for it.

Now, nearing the end of a long life—he is almost eighty—Kazan has published an extensive *apologia pro vita sua*. It is a somewhat overweight book, justified by Kazan's claim that he was "the most successful director at work in America from the mid-40's through the early 60's." Joshua Logan, who died last July, might have disputed this judgment, but there is no point in caviling over show-business hyperbole. A more interesting question is who *was* Kazan to rate the furious and vindictive ostracism which followed his HUAC testimony? We know that he was not a grand political figure. Was he at least a seminal creative talent in his profession, who had let down the side?

To achieve such status, Kazan would have to stand in the same class with, say, Max Reinhardt, Erwin Piscator, or Stanislavsky. But these comparisons are ridiculous. The Group Theater and the Actors' Studio did have some influence—much of it pernicious—on American theater and, much later, on a few people in Britain and Germany. But that was largely through

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HERB GREER *is an American playwright and author who lives in England. His play,* Vanzetti and Sacco and Rosie, *was produced in New York this past summer.*

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the work of Lee Strasberg; Kazan makes it clear that he thought the Group, and Strasberg, narrow and self-indulgent in their approach.

THE way he tells it, Kazan's own success in the theater rested on a talent for personal and social deviousness combined with ruthless arrogance, plus an ability to handle egregiously childish stars sensibly and sympathetically. He also had the good luck to direct premieres of some of the most famous plays of wartime and postwar American theater, including *The Skin of Our Teeth, Death of a Salesman, A Streetcar Named Desire,* and a number of other successes that appealed to the peculiar American taste for emotional catharsis. Finally, he was associated with some of the best "star" talent: not just Strasberg disciples like Marlon Brando but eccentric figures like Tallulah Bankhead and such top mainstream actors as Hume Cronyn, Jessica Tandy, and Fredric March.

He is painstaking about his limitations: a good but "not a great" eye, a lack of flair for humor—"What I need, I steal"—and a total dearth of the cultural scope and sensibility required to deal with classics. This weakness was brutally exposed during his brief and disastrous spell as a director of Lincoln Center's would-be repertory company. By his own account Kazan also had no taste for Shakespeare's poetry or for that of anyone else, and none for music, either. The fact is that he was a very good journeyman director who, in one of those unpredictable turns of show-business fate, became fashionable for a while. His writing, like his directing, was part and parcel of an archetypical American success story in which energy and drive overcame the handicaps of an immigrant boyhood and a limited talent.

A Turkish Greek, Kazan was born in Constantinople in 1909 and was brought to the United States just before World War I. This "family" part of his story is told in mechanical and rather soporific prose. It is only when Kazan gets into the nuts and bolts of his theatrical work that the book becomes really interesting, mainly as a craftsman's description of how to handle difficult actors (deviously, larding them with flattering hypocrisy tempered by anger), and as a practical guide to working with prominent playwrights. Much of this material should be required reading for any student who intends to go into the theater and has not yet learned how thoroughly the profession is infected by pretentious nonsense.

Yet Kazan himself, for all his common sense, is not immune to the political form of this affliction. Despite his 1952 performance in Washington, he retains a "commitment" to a vaguely left-wing stance. Although it would not be fair to place too much emphasis on the politics of this book, neither is it correct to say, as Kazan himself did in a newspaper interview, that there are only 40 political pages out of 800. *A Life* is suffused with political feeling and posing.

Kazan is unapologetic about the exposure of his "friends" to the

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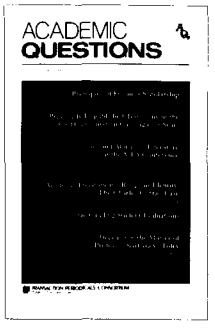

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Committee, noting that they were pro-Soviet, and could not claim ignorance of the horrible things that were going on under Stalin. "Hell," he writes, "we all knew, and some even thought it justified." Quite rightly his instincts told him it was pointless to sacrifice his career so that such people could operate in secret. But late in life, he has changed his mind—in a way. He now supposes that "human beings" and "politics" can somehow be separated, so that if there is a choice between "politics" and not "hurting human beings," the proper decision is to avoid the hurt. He affects qualms of conscience at having failed to do that.

This comes close to the famous remark by E.M. Forster: ". . . if I had to choose between betraying my country and betraying my friend, I hope I should have the guts to betray my country." Yet when Kazan found himself, as he puts it, "on a great social griddle, and frying," it was not just because of betrayed "friendship," but for having exposed the fans of a regime that had itself slaughtered tens of millions more "human beings" than the Nazis murdered during the Holocaust. By some insane twist of logic, his friends had placed loyalty to that regime above the elected authority of a democratic government. Their foreign loyalty was inimical not only to American democracy, but—as the book shows, describing American Communist treatment of artists—to Kazan himself.

KAZAN does not fail to recognize the species of people he was dealing with. He pins them down neatly as those "whom the waves of thought and art in the 40's, when they retreated, left stranded. . . . Now, in the light of a cold morning, those dreams are troubled when they exist at all, and on the beach lie the remains of that other time." Nor has the tribe disappeared from the American landscape. Kazan, as well as anybody, should be able to recognize the new forms its "dreams" have taken—*Sandinismo,* the African National Congress, the irredentist fanatics of the Middle East, etc.—and see how these "causes" still hypnotize figures like Marlon Brando, Vanessa Redgrave, and others of their ilk.

What then is he doing, courting such a crew? His musings might be construed as a Tartuffish attempt to have it both ways, but the closest he comes to a real explanation is rather less amusing:

> Why had I posed [*sic*] as a left-oriented liberal for so long? I'm embarrassed to confess that it was for no real reason. It was only because, in that position, I was "in."

This is more revealing than Kazan may intend; it suggests that his so-called "friends" and the "human beings" who were hurt by his testimony had better reason to loathe him than they knew.

Kazan makes great play with candor in this book, primarily through a scattering of unpleasant confessions (like the one just quoted), plus a great deal of banal exhibitionism over his sex life. Even so, the worst of his faults—lechery, hypocrisy, sexual revenge, duplicity, abuse of his authority as a director, selfishness, arrogance—are shown in a manner calculated to inspire more envy or affection than censure. The most damning admission, that all he wanted from his political color was to be "in," is like the weary shrug of a very old man. Who, after all, is going to hold any of this against him now? That is why, for all its parading of sins, large patches of this baggy, motley costume of a book read less like confession than manipulation. Perhaps it is that quality which finally explains the remarkable survival and success of Elia Kazan.

Baudelaires of East Broadway

A LITTLE LOVE IN BIG MAHATTAN: TWO YIDDISH POETS. By RUTH R. WISSE. *Harvard University Press. 279 pp. $25.00.*

Reviewed by DONNA RIFKIND

THE STORY Ruth R. Wisse tells in her latest book is, like the poem from which she takes her title, ironic and bittersweet. It is the story of a group of young Yiddish-speaking immigrants in turn-of-the-century New York who lived for poetry. Their brief, doomed movement to fashion a purified Yiddish aesthetic, one which was committed not to any political or social ideal but to language itself, began in 1907 and was known as *Di Yunge* ("The Young").

In the two decades between the first major wave of Jewish immigration in the 1880's and the years when these poets arrived, Yiddish culture in America had already undergone a number of changes. The first Yiddish literature, typified by the "sweatshop school" of poetry, was didactic and blunt; it addressed itself entirely to the requirements of the working-class population, depended on a close alliance with the Yiddish press, and was cut off from the folk traditions of the prose masters—Sholem Aleichem, Mendele, Peretz—who were then writing their best works in Russia and Poland. The sweatshop poets, responding to a totally unfamiliar tenement and factory existence, engineered a kind of literary expression that suited the needs of their uprooted, bewildered audience. Their poetry was little more than a bald testimony to this community's hard new life.

By the time the future members of the *Yunge* appeared, conditions were somewhat altered. The daily routine for most of the immigrants was no less strenuous, but in twenty-five years an energetic, multifaceted Yiddish culture had evolved. Under the editorship of Abraham Cahan, the socialist newspaper *Forverts* ("Forward") had grown into the largest foreign-language daily paper in America. Yiddish theater was a much livelier presence than it had ever been allowed to become in Europe. Literary cafés were buzzing with eager voices; Yiddish-language magazines with sections devoted to literature were starting to spring up regularly, their socialist editors constantly on the watch for new ideological positions. Perhaps the most radical of these magazines was *Di yugnt* ("Youth"), begun in the winter of 1907-08, which emphasized the importance of having no ideological loyalties at all.

The only allegiance the *Yunge* claimed for themselves was a duty to literature—Yiddish literature—

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for its own sake. They shut themselves off from political idealism and directed their firepower toward the Yiddish press, which for them symbolized the mass consciousness they sought to escape. As one of the rebels, Zishe Landau, asserted, up till then Yiddish poetry had been serving merely as "the rhyme department of the Jewish labor movement"; for the *Yunge*, by contrast, the importance of poetry lay precisely in its autonomous existence, its distance from everyday concerns.

The *Yunge* wanted the language of their poems to be hard, clear, and concentrated—somewhat like the imagist poems that were starting to emerge in England and America at about this time—but also to incorporate the refinement and subtlety of late 19th-century symbolist verse. Each word ought to resonate, simply but deeply, and the poem as a whole ought to be as musical as possible, with harmonizing meter and rhyme. Purity of language, for them, meant avoiding both newspaper jargon and German and Hebrew expressions which had found their way into everyday Yiddish speech. And if the use of the language was to be pure, the content ought to be purer: it was to contain no sentimentality and no bombast; it was to be understated, sensual, spiritual.

Perhaps the example of *Yunge* poetry which manages best to incorporate all these high-minded ideals is Mani Leib's "*Shtiller, shtiller*" ("Hush, hush"), a poem about waiting for the messiah, which opens this way:

Hush and hush—no sound be heard.
Bow in grief but say no word.
Black as pain and white as death,
Hush and hush and hold your breath.

One by one they declared their devotion to this pure, self-contained aesthetic: Mani Leib, Reuben Iceland, Zishe Landau, Moishe Leib Halpern. Barely twenty, fresh from various parts of the Jewish Pale, working endless hours in bootmaking factories or as window washers, they gathered at night in the cafés to discuss the French symbolists and Walt Whitman. They were lucky to steal a few moments alone in a crowded, noisy apartment, these Baudelaires of East Broadway, to write longingly of stillness, quiet, trees, snow. To their heated debates they brought the zeal of the formal religious practices they had all but abandoned. They called themselves "a new kind of *minyan*"; for them, poetry was like the promise of the Sabbath or of Mani Leib's breathlessly awaited messiah—it brought the redemption of the world into closer view. They saw themselves as dandies, as aesthetes, with "their elegant canes, their long hair and their wide, sweeping hats," but what one notices first about them is how close to the *shtetl* they still were, and how young, how full of books and spite and cheerfulness and strength.

A less sensitive writer than Mrs. Wisse might have been tempted to sentimentalize this story, but she is scrupulously aware of the danger. Her documentation is careful and steady, her tone reserved; she allows the poignance in the story she tells to express itself through the poetry and through the facts of the poets' lives. Mrs. Wisse had originally planned to write a literary history of the whole *Yunge* movement, but in the end she has concentrated on two members, Mani Leib and Moishe Leib Halpern, letting the others serve as "voices of the chorus." Because the two poets she chose are on the surface so different, their stories together make a fine natural structure for the book.

Mani Leib grew up in a city called Niezhin in the Ukraine, the birthplace of Gogol. Before he emigrated at the age of twenty, he was apprenticed to a bootmaker and later imprisoned for agitating against the czar. Incarceration in this cause was a point of great pride for him, and he was glad to have the free time to devote to writing poems. When he was arrested a second time, however, he decided to escape to America. Shortly thereafter, employed as a bootmaker in New York, he was able to bring his sweetheart Chasia to America; they married and had five children in ten years, living in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn.

Most people considered Mani Leib to be the most attractive member of the *Yunge*. Gentle, dreamy, wistful about his childhood, writing poems noted for their musicality, he was called a Joseph among his brothers. But life was not particularly full of rewards for this sweet-tempered poet. His marriage was almost immediately unhappy, but his wife refused him a divorce. He fell in love with a writer named Rochelle Weprinski, with whom he lived intermittently, and was obliged to support both his own large family and Rochelle's household on his factory salary. One of the happiest periods of his life was spent in a sanatorium where he was treated for tuberculosis; there, as in prison, he at last had the uninterrupted leisure to write his poems.

Moishe Leib Halpern had a nearly opposite personality; if Mani Leib was a Joseph, Halpern was an Esau crouching over his mess of pottage, rough, angry, mocking, suspicious. He came from a relatively wealthy family in the town of Zlochev in the Austro-Hungarian empire and was sent at twelve to Vienna to be apprenticed to a commercial artist. When he returned to his hometown in 1907 he felt himself a stranger, steeped as he was in German literature and culture. But he decided to return to a Jewish way of life and voluntarily chose Yiddish—rather than German, Hebrew, Polish, or Russian—as his literary language.

When Halpern arrived in New York in 1908 he immediately tried to become the most eccentric of all the young individualists in the literary community. He refused to seek steady employment, writing verses for Yiddish humor magazines only when he needed a few dollars. He took pleasure in taunting and outraging potential publishers of his work and showed a reckless contempt for both sides of every ideological battle: he mocked both lapsed Jews and observant ones, those who had lofty goals for Yiddish literature and those who thought it should address the common people; when there was a split among the *Yunge* in 1914, he took neither side and published parodies of both.

For all his crankiness, Halpern was no crackpot. What made him unable to take a position was his

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sense of irony, a troublesome gift for seeing all sides of an argument down to the most meticulous details, so that in every point of view he could spot the seeds of its opposite and thereby reject it. In his speaking tours across the country for the Communist newspaper *Freiheit*—whose views he eventually, and characteristically, came to repudiate—he became a wandering promoter of Yiddish culture, an emblem of its rootlessness and its portability. In one of his poems he called himself a "street drummer," a rhythmic noisemaker, "reckless and free, on alien dirt."

THEY seem very different, Moishe Leib Halpern and Mani Leib, the lion and the lamb, the street drummer and the wistful balladeer, yet in their poetry they prove themselves more fundamentally alike than one might imagine. In an excellent analysis, Mrs. Wisse explains that Halpern's poetic identity is divided into two parts, the "mocker" and the "mourner":

> The mocker is the principle of energy, the mourner of impotence and death. The mocker is protean, vivid, inventive. The mourner is passive, helpless, leaving earth without even a trace of his presence.

It is this ability to hold contradictory identities in his head that makes Halpern a complex and interesting poet. And Mani Leib's verses display similar dichotomies: between the earthbound heart and the upward-reaching soul, isolation and solidarity, doubt and faith. Both poets share that very serious sense of irony, of understanding too well all sides of a situation. No doubt it was this quality that led them both to seek refuge in the intellectually pure atmosphere of the *Yunge*.

If desire for purity brought the poets together, it was purity that dissolved the group; the atmosphere eventually became too thin for them to continue. World War I signaled the ruin of Jewish life in Europe, a grim milestone marking the end of these writers' innocent youth. Many of them could no longer ignore the political situation erupting around them and were drawn into various socialist and Communist causes. Others were forced to give up poetry as a profession in order to support their growing families. In the wake of the *Yunge* arose another group known as the Introspectivists, who rebelled against the smoothness and disengagement of the earlier movement's verse.

But Yiddish culture was on the decline even as this new group gathered. Like most immigrants in the interwar years, the Introspectivists were becoming more formally educated than the *Yunge*, more American, more interested in mainstream culture than in retaining their own cohesion. Yiddish literature was endangered both by the economic poverty of its readers and by their eventual economic success: in poverty nobody could afford to buy volumes of Yiddish verse; in wealth the push to become assimilated meant abandoning *mameloshen* altogether.

MRS. WISSE'S book is more than a memorial to these most interesting writers; it is an attempt, as she writes, "to return to modern Jews part of their lost inheritance and, more important, to locate for American Yiddish poets their rightful place in the American canon." The first goal she achieves with remarkable judiciousness, economy, and skill. The question of how well she has accomplished the second has much to do with the large issue of how Yiddish has survived as a language without ever having had a permanent geographical home.

Yiddish is by definition an independent tongue, a language of homelessness. While it is true that some of the *Yunge* wrote verse that owes its existence to the American landscape—Joseph Rolnick's country-life portraits, which bear a resemblance to those of Robert Frost, or I.J. Schwartz's *Kentucky*, a Whitmanesque quasi-epic—the group's contribution on the whole belongs more to world, and specifically European, literature than to the American canon. Its models were the 19th-century European poets: Pushkin, Blok, Rilke, Hofmannsthal, Baudelaire. In later years, when the work of the *Yunge* was known to most European Jewish poets, they were often invited to participate in transcontinental exchanges. They enthusiastically translated into Yiddish Slavic songs, Scottish ballads, and Shakespeare.

It was only with the Introspectivists that attention began to be paid to American poetry beyond Whitman. But not even the Introspectivists can be said to have become part of the American poetic canon, though they came the closest. Yiddish culture was too self-contained within its own traditions on the one hand, and too engaged in world literature on the other, successfully to assimilate itself into American literature.

The *Yunge* were expatriates of a kind; indeed, by the time they reached America, expatriation was a point of view that had already been integrated into their consciousness. Theirs was a small, stubborn voice which could be taken anywhere, although (as they themselves predicted) it was not guaranteed to survive anywhere. And yet the literary merits of the *Yunge*, so brilliantly displayed and explicated by Mrs. Wisse, are undeniable, and their work remains properly of great interest to modern American Jews in search (as she puts it) of "their lost inheritance," to lovers of poetry, and to American literary critics and historians. Mrs. Wisse ends her book with a sad question which is also a challenge to these diverse readers: "Was the new Yiddish psalter imprinted for all time in the stones of East Broadway, or did it sink with the poets into a place as lost as Atlantis?"

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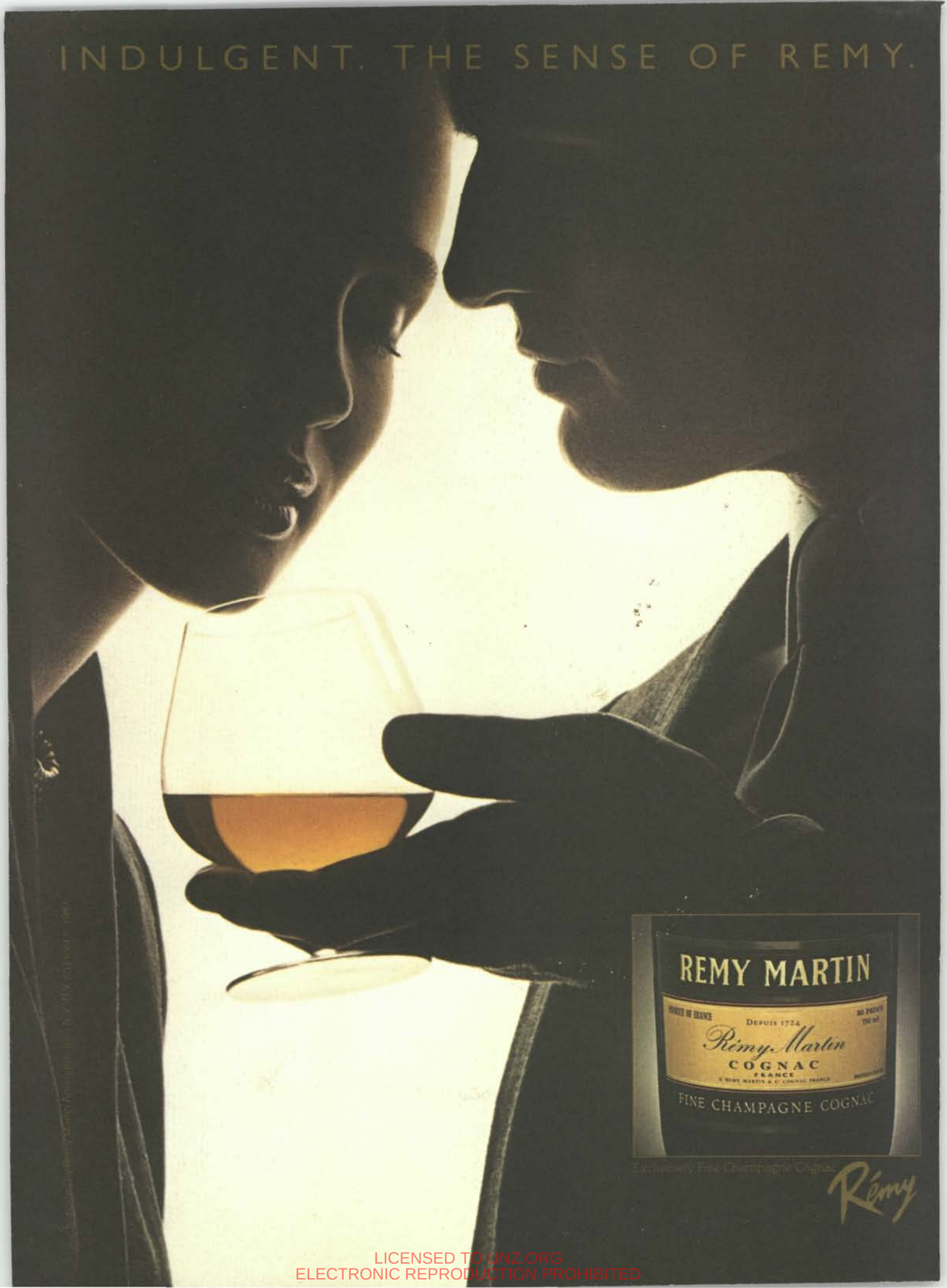

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